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THE
VAUDEVILLE THEATRE

BUILDING
OPERATION
MANAGEMENT

BY

EDWARD RENTON

NEW YORK
GOTHAM PRESS, Inc.
Publishers
225 WEST 39th STREET

LOAN STACK

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Printed in U.S.A.

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PREFACE

NO one understands better than does the author that to write a book containing all the accurate details as to just how one should build, open and manage a vaudeville theatre would be a well-nigh impossible undertaking. The author can hope only to bring to your notice some hints and suggestions as to things you may have known and overlooked. No doubt each vaudeville theatre manager, builder or owner will find many things on which he will disagree with the author; nevertheless, if the reader finds some points of value, the work will not be wasted.

It should be understood that all dimensions, materials and prices mentioned in this book are approximate and must be governed by existing local building codes, rulings of competent architects, size of ground plots and the ever-changing costs of materials.

The data and thoughts conveyed in this volume were collected during years of practical experience, close observation and personal contact with the "other fellows," some successful, some failures.

For both success and failure there are reasons, and it is the desire of the author to set some of them before you.

EDWARD RENTON.

New York
April 25, 1918

CHAPTER I

GENERAL CONSTRUCTION

Location, Site and Capacity

IN this day and age, it costs a great deal of money to erect a modern vaudeville theatre. That this cost may be justified and an adequate return upon the investment realized, it is essential first that the builder satisfy himself that there is a profitable field for the operation of such a theatre. Emphasis is laid upon this point for the reason that there is perhaps no single cause contributing so generally to the financial failure of theatres in the country at large as the fact that they were built in cities which had already ample theatrical accommodations.

Our old friends "supply and demand" regulate the success of theatrical enterprises to just the same extent as they do most others.

If it has been decided that there is a profit-

able field for a theatre, the next point is that of choosing its location and site. Often the prospective builder owns or controls a site that he considers ideal, and has been by this fact prompted to erect a theatre. Sometimes it is the case that the prospective builder merely feels confident that another theatre is needed, and starts out to secure what he considers a desirable location. In either event, the matter of location and site is extremely important.

Taking it for granted that the proposed theatre is to cater to all classes of people—in other words, the average audience—the author will call attention to the more important points to be considered.

It is obvious that the better the location, the more business may reasonably be expected; the busier the street or corner, the more people passing, the more accessible to car-lines and the more centrally located, the greater, all other things being equal, will be the patronage given the theatre. It follows then that the theatre should seek the choicest site that can be secured upon terms or under conditions acceptable to the builder. The handicap of poor location has spelled disaster for many a theatre otherwise promising; and while it is true that if a show is sufficiently attractive, people will go out to

the woods to patronize it, the better practice is to make the theatre just as accessible as possible. This involves high rental, but it also insures good business; and a high rental in a choice location as against a cheaper rental in an inferior locale gives, in actual practice, the former much the advantage of the latter in realizing increased profits for the builder.

Once built, the theatre cannot be moved about like a circus; once located and built, it will be too late to justify a poor location by the thought that "they ought to come"—so look well to this point.

It is often the case that sufficient back ground or more inexpensive land in the rear of buildings fronting on a main street can be had, at the same time securing a twenty-five or thirty-foot frontage on the main street for lobby purposes, this connecting with the larger plot which should be sufficient in size to accommodate the auditorium proper.

Bear in mind that an undesirable neighborhood; dingy and ill-kept buildings on both sides of the theatre; a location such as requires your patrons to pass saloons or questionable resorts, are material factors. Following this line of thought, be careful that the location is not so close to railroad tracks that it will be almost

impossible to bar out the noise of switch engines and passing trains. Is there a fire station with its clanging bell adjoining the site or in rear of the proposed location; is there a livery stable with its smells and noises across the alley; a garage or other noisy institution so close that it may disturb patrons or be heard during quiet acts? Be careful to locate on the right side of the street, for there are a right and a wrong side of every street, a popular and an unpopular side. Which way is the "town" moving—is your location one that in a few years may be "out of it"? If so, don't build the theatre there. Bear in mind that a bank, a jeweler, a merchant may locate with much less need of observing this point so carefully. But a theatre, dependent upon the whim of the public in a large measure, should be so accessible that if the idea occurs to people, while "downtown," to see a show, they will find it conveniently located and easy to get to. Hundreds and hundreds of dollars will come to the favorably located house each season, which the unfavorably located one will not get, even if the one in the good location have somewhat the poorer show of the two. These conclusions are based upon actual experience and observation, not upon theories.

The location being decided upon, the exact site is the next consideration. Many a theatre has ruined its builder or promoters through being unsuitably located. Perhaps even before choosing a definite site, the question of capacity should be settled. Is it desired to seat from 2,000 to 2,500 persons upon two floors? Or that the capacity of the house shall be from 1,200 to 1,400? If the former, your site should be not less than 100 to 120 feet wide by 175 to 200 feet deep; and if the latter, not less than 100 by 140 feet. By adding a third floor or gallery, capacity may be increased five hundred seats on the smaller, or eight hundred on the larger plot.

By all means avoid the long, narrow theatre; and DO NOT plan to build two balconies, unless it is your intention to provide a separate floor for negroes; it is well to remember that in some cities the better classes of the negroes have declined to patronize a "second balcony" reserved for them exclusively and served from a separate ticket-window. Therefore, the better plan is to divide the balcony front and rear and provide a separate ticket-window and stairs for the negro patrons.

It is urgently recommended that the larger capacity be provided for if practicable. There

are many reasons for this, not the least of which is that given sufficient capacity, popular prices may be established and increased net earnings result. Also, if a theatre is established, and has sufficient capacity to meet price-cutting opposition, such opposition is much less likely to occur. The larger capacity permits a bigger show to be profitably presented, and it tends to popularize a theatre through the public's knowledge that a seat can generally be had at that theatre; whereas the smaller one is often overcrowded, forcing patrons to wait, stand or come back later for another show.

The probable growth of the city should be anticipated. During the current year, for instance, enormous camps of soldiers have been assembled near various cities. In such of them as happen to have theatres of large capacity, the owners and operators are reaping an unprecedented harvest; where builders were so shortsighted as to build for "today" alone, they see thousands of would-be patrons, unable to get into their theatres. Most cities have conventions, fairs, carnivals, etc. Build a theatre that will accommodate the crowds—for this means money that will make a great showing in annual results; and it will very likely be found that, if

properly conducted, provided with a consistently good show, and made popular by good management, the theatre will be comfortably filled, if not crowded, during normal times.

Be careful that the site allows for a wide sidewalk, and a commodious lobby; look to the provision for exit spaces that will be AMPLE. Regardless of the local legal requirements, provide a SAFE margin for these points. Do not scrimp—rather overdo. An area or alley-way at both sides of the theatre is very desirable. This not only provides emergency and fire exit space, but is of the greatest assistance in ventilating during the "dog days." Have these points in mind when choosing a site, and while the author realizes that often realty conditions make it difficult to secure the ideal location and site, it is much better not to build at all than to do so without giving these elements proper consideration.

PLANNING, DESIGNING AND CONSTRUCTION

A location and site for the proposed theatre having been chosen, the next problems confronting the builder involve the erection of the structure, choice of the architect who will plan and supervise its construction, the firm which will be entrusted with the general contract as well

as all sub-contractors who are awarded the various contracts in connection with its building.

In the first place, and upon this point all authorities seem to be agreed, the designing and planning of the theatre should be entrusted only to an architect who specializes in this branch of his profession. There is probably no other type of building which presents more difficult and complex demands upon the architect and builder than does a theatre. Problems peculiar to it are frequent and puzzling, and can be grappled with successfully only by a man thoroughly experienced in such work. The more theatres an architect has designed, the more desirable are his services. He should know the especial requirements for a vaudeville theatre, such as the necessity for planning the structure to facilitate the handling of crowds whether one, two, three or more shows are given daily; the need for first-class motion-picture projection, and the adapting of the building to a possible future change of policy. It is not sufficient, therefore, that he be merely a good architect; it is essential that he be a theatrical architect, not theoretically, but actually, if the theatre is to be beautiful inside and out, and as nearly perfect as possible in detail.

In the writer's opinion, if the builder is well

advised he will take a trip to see a few of the more recently built vaudeville theatres; will study them carefully, and form a more definite idea of modern practice by this means than is possible by any other.

Nearly every city governs the construction of theatres by a special code; in the main these codes are identical in their requirements as to fireproof construction, ample and safe exits and exit-ways. A serious responsibility rests not alone upon the builder, but upon the architect as well, for planning and devising a structure that shall be as safe as human ingenuity can devise and modern materials and equipment make it. From a purely selfish standpoint, the best practice and most approved means of accomplishing this are profitable; for the reduced premiums paid for insurance of various kinds will in the course of a very few years more than make up for the slightly increased original cost. Cost of fireproof construction does not, as a rule, exceed that of semi-fireproof by more than twenty per cent.

No attempt will be made to advise the prospective builder as to the best materials to use in the construction of the theatre to make it architecturally beautiful; it is assumed that the architect will handle this feature with due re-

gard for such matters as cost, durability, effect of climate, etc., whether the structure is to be built of terra-cotta, brick, artificial or natural marble, cement products, tile or stone.

Therefore, having in mind the planning of a house not only to take care of to-day's business and policy but with an eye to the future and a possible change of policy as well, various points will be considered in relation to the designing and construction of the modern vaudeville theatre.

Sight Lines

A great many theatres have been built without proper attention having been given to the matter of establishing the sight lines, with the result that after opening, a great many seats in the house were practically unsalable on account of their undesirability as points from which to see the show.

The line of vision—or sight line—from every seat to the stage must be unobstructed. No patron should be subjected to the discomfort of twisting about in order to see the stage. If, because of defective sight lines, certain seats are known to be undesirable, their sale at the box-office is attended by difficulty and dispute.

Regardless of the size of the theatre, it is just as easy as not to locate every seat in such a way as will make it a desirable point from which to see the show.

When, in planning the theatre, the subject of sight lines is under consideration, the builder and architect are urged not to pass this point until they KNOW that they have it accurately, properly and intelligently settled. This involves the elimination of columns or obstructing posts; proscenium boxes which interfere with the view from side seats, and low-hung balcony fronts. In a modern theatre, the use of columns may be avoided by the cantilever system of balcony and gallery support.

In establishing the sight lines, the reader will not go wrong if the following requirements are met:

A person standing at the back rail, in the center of the main floor, should have an unobstructed view of the asbestos curtain line at eighteen feet above the stage floor.

A line drawn along the edge of the steppings in the balcony or gallery should intersect the curtain line between 4 feet 6 inches and 5 feet 6 inches below the stage.

That the occupants of rear seats in the balcony may have a full view of aerial acts, it is

essential that the proscenium opening be not less than twenty-seven feet high at the center of the opening.

The balcony steppings in the front of the balcony should pitch slightly toward the side of the house, being highest in the center and grade up so that at the last stepping in the rear of the balcony they are perfectly level all the way across the house. This pitch to the sides in the front rows of the balcony is, of course, to be graduated according to the width of the house. A width of one hundred feet should pitch about one foot from the center.

The builder is strongly advised not to construct a gallery, or second balcony. They increase the cost of building out of all proportion to the revenue derived from the seats. Gallery seats are the cheapest in the house and the increased height of the building is the costliest construction.

If it is deemed necessary to care separately for negro patrons, it is preferable to do this by dividing the balcony with an iron rail, seating negroes in the rear and providing a separate entrance, stairs and ticket-window for this portion of the house. On account of ventilation requirements, the one-balcony idea is prefer-

able, especially if it is to be partly occupied by negroes.

Returning to consideration of the sight line requirements: The main floor pitch, accurately determined and based upon actual practice in the construction of many theatres, should be as follows:

First Row	8'4" below level of stage floor (neither more nor less)
Next seven rows	on same level as first row.
Next eight rows	pitch floor ¼" to the foot
Next eight rows	pitch floor ⅜" to the foot
Next eight rows	pitch floor ⅝" to the foot
Next eight rows	pitch floor ¾" to the foot
Next eight rows	pitch floor 1" to the foot
Next eight rows	pitch floor 1¼" to the foot
Next eight rows	pitch floor 1½" to the foot

Cement floors should not be less than 2 in. thick, clear cement finish, in order that chairs may be securely fastened. Wood floors should not be less than 1⅛ in. thick, with a 1-in. mixture of cement and cinders, solidly packed, underneath the wood flooring. Of the two floors, cement is the cheaper to lay, though not as comfortable unless there is a heated basement.

It is well established that not less than two-thirds of the stage should be visible to those seated in the extreme side seats. If the plot size is such that it is possible to arrange seating so that more than two-thirds of the stage will be visible to persons so seated, it is very desir-

able that this be done. To accomplish this it is necessary that the width of the house in proportion to the proscenium opening be accurately adjusted, and that proscenium boxes be carefully placed so as not to obstruct the view from the extreme sides.

In general, it will be seen that the slope or grade of the floor results in those in the front rows looking slightly upward, those in about center looking in a practically level direction, and those in rear rows looking somewhat downward, establishing a different sight line from each seat and each row to a given point on the stage. It is therefore necessary so to adjust the pitch or slope and so set the chairs as will make it unnecessary for the patron to crane or stretch from side to side, up or down, in order to look past the person seated immediately in front. Every seat should be placed at right angles with the line of vision from that seat, and an aisle should NEVER be located down the center of the house.

The writer hopes that the important subject of sight lines will receive from the architect and builder the thorough and careful attention it merits.

Acoustics

The transmission and reflection of sound waves has now been reduced to a matter of exact scientific knowledge, and we are able accurately to solve the problem of acoustics as governed by known conditions. In other words, we now know under just what circumstances a sound wave may be projected a maximum distance; under what conditions it will be muffled, deadened or destroyed, and this knowledge enables us to secure good acoustic properties in the erection of a theatre.

A sound wave starts at the origin of the sound and expands in all directions until either lost by constantly diminished power, or reflected, as a ray of light would be, into other directions until diminished to inaudibility. Thus, the sound originated on the stage strikes the ceiling, walls and boundaries of the space within the auditorium, and is reflected from these surfaces to the ears of the audience. A certain portion of the expanding sound wave reaches the ear directly, without reflection. It is essential that the direct wave, or spoken word transmitted as sound, reach the ear at the same time as the reflected wave or word. If it does not do this, then the sound or word is broken into two

or more bits, each reaching the ear an infinitesimal fraction of time apart, with the result that the word is confused, difficult to understand or to hear clearly. The ear is not sensitive enough to catch the distinct separation of these waves, except in case of a pronounced echo, but does appreciate that the sound has become muffled, indistinct and hard to "understand."

To make this still more clear, let us assume that a pistol is fired on the stage. The sharp report radiates from its source in every direction; that going backward is reflected out front by the back wall or the scenery; some goes up (if there is no ceiling on the set) and is lost in the rigging; some goes out into the auditorium, strikes the walls, ceilings, draperies, etc., and is by these reflected into space again, but being confined to the auditorium, does not diffuse itself into open atmosphere. Then, part of the wave, not reflected, reaches DIRECTLY from the source to the ear. Now, as sound travels with extreme rapidity, it is possible so to arrange the auditorium that each reflected wave will reach the ear at practically the same instant as the direct wave. The surfaces which the sound is to strike must be taken into consideration, as to material and construction; the very high ceiling, deeply recessed box and echoing

dome should be avoided; these not only dissipate the sound originated on stage and "lose" it by repeated re-reflections within their own confines, but as well bring it tardily to the ear of the audience, and confuse its clarity and sharpness. The echo is but a sound wave reflected a longer distance and consequently reaching the auditory sense an appreciable time after the direct wave has been received.

The acoustic properties of the auditorium will therefore be largely governed by the height of the ceiling or "dome," the number of nooks and crannies in which the waves may be lost or muffled (every obstruction to their smooth passage or direct reflection operating to deaden them), the material of which the walls are made and covered, the character of draperies, curtain, etc.

If the sound wave is treated as a light ray would be, and its reflections thus studied, it becomes a simple matter to calculate just what the effect of certain structural arrangements will have upon the acoustics of the theatre.

Heating and Ventilation

There are many types of heating systems, but despite the often plausible and convincing

arguments of their supporters, systems
than "direct radiation" with live steam
heating agent, have in actual practice,
short of the requirements of the theatre,
here, as in most other departments, pre
problems peculiar to itself.

Here we have a large roofed auditor
which prior to the time of shows requires
siderable heat to be generated and radiated
warm it; then during the brief half-hour t
it is being filled with people, the doors are c
stantly opened, requiring still more heat to ke
it from being chilled; yet shortly after it
filled, the animal or body heat given off by t
people in it necessitates a rapid reduction in th
amount of heat being radiated, which is re
placed by that from the bodies of the audience

Ample boiler or generating capacity, com-
bined with intelligently calculated radiating sur-
face, properly placed, and the use of steam as
the heating agent, has again and again proved
its superiority to every other known heating
system, and in the writer's opinion will hold its
position of supremacy in this field.

As a general proposition, the radiation should
be greater in the lobby and near outside open-
ings, than in spaces walled up or closed; for if
the cold air which comes into the house during

the time it is being filled and emptied is heated at the point of entrance, the draft occasioned will not be so noticeable or so injurious to patrons as when this cold air is not at least partly heated at the point of entrance.

It is not to be understood that the temperature is to be changed, but that a reduction in steam pressure, immediately after the house is filled, is essential to allow for the heat added to the atmosphere by radiation from the human bodies within the theatre.

Architect's plans should provide for placing all radiators in lobby, foyer, incidental rooms and auditorium, in recesses in walls. After being placed they should be protected by a one-inch mesh brass or iron wire guard, which should be hinged or arranged to open so that space may be cleaned, radiator repaired, etc. On the stage, if radiators are not in recesses and protected, as suggested, by meshed guards, they may be placed on walls at least eighteen feet above the stage floor, so as to "clear" the scenery packs, etc. As hot air rises quickly, if they are placed so high considerable heat will be wasted, therefore it is preferable to recess stage radiators into walls at floor level.

The problem of properly heating the theatre is so closely connected with that of ventilating

it that the two subjects are treated under one heading.

Air is rapidly vitiated in an auditorium filled with people, and if kept warm, but not renewed with fresh air, will soon sicken the audience—cause fainting and headaches and have other generally disagreeable results.

There are various ventilating systems, each with its supporters, and each possessing its good points. There is the system which contemplates forcing air, by means of electric fans, through a spray of cooled water or over chilled pipes, or through ice vaults into the theatre, and exhausting it through ceiling ports after it has been vitiated; there is a system which contemplates forcing the air in at the ceiling and exhausting it through the floor ducts, and there is the system which provides for forcing in a large volume of air and permitting it to find its own means of egress, through doors, windows, etc. Ceiling and wall fans are often used to supplement these systems.

The writer does not recommend any special system above any other, but he does insist upon the importance of a proper system of ventilation, to be effective and yet economical in operation, to keep the house cool in summer and fresh and sweet-smelling in winter. Foresight

in this matter will make a theatre an "all-year" enterprise and the original expense of installation will be more than justified by the increase in hot-weather patronage.

Plumbing

It may be well to emphasize a few points in connection with this, and to lay stress upon the necessity of providing amply sized sewer connections; waste pipes being laid with sufficient "fall" and of size large enough to take care of their load; water supply pipes of sufficient size to carry a good "head" of water to the highest fixtures; of installing cleaner's sink connected with hot and cold water on each floor of the theatre and, on dressing-room floors, large lavatories for each dressing-room with hot and cold water supply, and hose connection for one-inch line at front of building, in lobby, on stage and under stage for use of cleaners.

Exits

In another chapter the subject of panics, danger of insufficient exits, etc., is treated at length. The purpose of this article is to suggest that in planning the theatre more exits than the law requires be, if possible, provided;

that the exit lights be placed in metal boxes, recessed into the wall above doors and decorated with ornamental plaster or stucco frame or front, harmonizing with the other decorations of the theatre.

There should be not less than two exits on each side of the house for each floor. They should be not less than 5 feet wide and open outward, entirely into clear and flat back against the outside wall. The two exits on each side should be separated from each other as widely as possible. Practically every city in the country regulates width and location of exits by ordinance, and the foregoing meets the average requirements. If the city does not regulate this feature of construction, the state laws usually do, and both should be carefully consulted in planning the construction. "Exits," within the meaning of the law, are sometimes considered as distinct from the lobby or entrance doors.

As a general proposition there should be not less than 25 feet of lobby door openings, though this need not all be in one place. For instance, the lobby might be 15 feet wide, with 15 feet of lobby door openings, and then 10 or 12 feet of doors may be put in the side of the auditorium, if it faces on a street or an alley which

leads to a street. The orchestra floor exit area, with two 5-foot exits on each side, and 25 feet through or in connection with lobby, gives a total of 45 feet of exit space for the main floor.

Lobby

The treatment of the lobby as to decorations, etc., will naturally require careful attention. As to its size, that point will very likely be governed by the size and lay-out of the plot, and the building codes, but it is suggested that with the constantly rising value of property, and in accordance with modern practice in the larger cities, the lobby space be limited to what will be required actually to handle the crowds, and not provide a loafing place for the populace. Toilets, check-rooms, smoking-rooms, etc., should not be planned with entrances off the lobby, but all such facilities placed within the theatre, so that those using them must have passed the door-man; this is assurance that they will be used only by patrons of the theatre, and not by the public at large. The public telephone booth may be located off the lobby, and should be provided for; its facilities should be available without entrance to the theatre, as

patrons often wish to call friends about tickets when they purpose purchasing, etc.

All radiators should be recessed, as has been stated, provision should be made for wall frames and "lobby display" of photos, etc.

Foyer

Sanitary drinking fountains and entrances to ladies' and gentlemen's retiring rooms should be located here. Also, if desired, a room in which trays, cups, etc., may be kept for ushers' use in passing water. If this is done, pipe water here for cooler. All doors should be equipped with approved door checks that will close them noiselessly, but SURELY. Arrange both ladies' and gentlemen's retiring rooms so that persons passing in foyer cannot look into them.

The foyer should be twelve to fifteen feet in width, from the standing rail to lobby doors or back wall. This not only will provide ample space in which to handle patrons to the various aisles, but sufficient revenue earning "standing room" to justify the width upon those occasions when all seats are sold.

Boxes and Loggias

Properly located, boxes add considerably to

the dignity and decorative effects of the theatre; and there are a good many people who prefer to sit in them even if they are not the best location in the house. Boxes and loggias bring a larger revenue, per seat, than other sections of the house. Loggias, located in front of the balcony and railed off into enclosures, seat four to a dozen persons. Behind these the "first rows" of the balcony command the usual balcony price, while the loggia seats command the price of main floor accommodations. It is good practice to have these a little more elaborately carpeted than the other section of the balcony, with chairs of the same types as are used in the boxes.

The Stage

As to size—if possible, let the minimum be 75 feet into clear from wall to wall, and 40 feet from curtain line to back wall. The author realizes that this must obviously be regulated by the size of the plot and the space available, yet the plot should be chosen, if possible, with a view not only to securing sufficient room for an ample capacity in the auditorium, space for lobby, areas, exit-ways, etc., but as well to afford adequate stage room.

Vaudeville shows come along with a rather voluminous array of properties, sometimes; for instance, a diving act with a big tank, an animal act with a number of cages, a sketch with special set and furniture, or a singing act with a grand piano; and limited stage room hampers the proper presentation of such shows.

The proscenium opening should be proportioned about as follows:

WIDTH OF THEATRE	PROSCENIUM ARCH	
	WIDTH	HEIGHT
50 feet	30 feet	24 feet
60 feet	34 feet	30 feet
70 feet	40 feet	34 feet
80 feet	44 feet	36 feet
90 feet	46 feet	38 feet

In general, the rule is that the width of the proscenium should be six feet greater than its height.

The floor of the stage "in one" should be laid in maple or other hardwood, and the balance of the stage in good, clear, narrow T & G flooring, free from knots, thoroughly kiln dried and seasoned. No other floor is required to stand the abuse that a stage floor is called upon to sustain, and to be right, it must be securely laid. The flooring should run up and down; that is, be laid from apron to back wall, not from side wall to side wall.

The fly-gallery, located on the "prompt" side, with thoroughly secured pin rail, floor, etc., should run from back wall to front wall of stage, and if there is room on stage, it is well to locate a pin rail there also, to which working lines may be run; this in some cases eliminates one employee, through lack of need for a flyman. In any event, a small pin rail should be located on stage in the average theatre, for use with acts requiring a "life line," etc. The floor of the fly-gallery should be at least 24 feet in height above the stage and 8 to 14 feet in width. The pin rails should be located front and back of the gallery, the front rail for working lines and the back one for "dead" lines.

About 10 feet above the stage floor, on both sides of the proscenium arch, should be firmly fastened platforms for use of spotlight operators required by big or spectacular acts.

The rigging loft should not be less than 50 feet above stage. Standpipes, fire-fighting equipment, fire alarm box, should all be so placed that scenery can not be packed against or over them; and they should be, preferably, placed in recesses in the walls, so as to leave the surface of the stage walls, so far as practicable, free of obstruction.

The gridiron, or rigging loft, needs to be of

very secure construction, as it is often required to carry a very heavy load. There should be 6 feet of headroom between gridiron and roof.

The asbestos curtain of approved weight and construction, running in sheet iron runways, is now so universally required by law that provision for one of these is not likely to be overlooked. Counterweighting and balancing it so that it runs easily, smoothly and noiselessly is, of course, essential. The asbestos curtain should be 2 feet larger each way, side and top, than the opening.

The loading door should not be less than 8 feet wide by 16 feet high, with a smaller door inside the larger one, for use when it is not necessary to open the bigger door. Care should be taken that this is securely hung and swings freely when opened.

The switchboard should be placed on the "prompt" side of the stage, its edge about 6 feet in from proscenium frame (if located on stage) and should stand 3 feet from the wall, with wall recessed behind it so as to provide ample working space. It should be so located that the electrician can see the action taking place "in one," through an opening which he will doubtless provide for that purpose, close to the wall, in the first entrance. In the larger

theatres, switchboards are frequently located above the floor of the stage, but this should be done only when it is known that the crew will be so numerous as to provide the electrician with sufficient assistants so that he will not have any duties to perform requiring his presence on the floor of the stage during the show. In general, it will make for economy to locate the board on the floor, and it will not lessen its efficiency or that of its operator.

Incidental Rooms

Strange as it may seem, it is not unusual for theatres to be planned and built without proper provision for the various rooms needed for accommodation of the several departments of the house. To provide a check against this possible oversight, the rooms or quarters now considered most essential in the modern theatre are:

Manager's office; superintendent's office; janitor's and cleaners', ushers' dressing, ladies', gentlemen's, supply (adjacent to manager's or superintendent's), property, electrician's, stage manager's, carpenter's and musicians' rooms, toilets and any others deemed necessary for the requirements of a particular theatre.

These should be allowed for, and their ven-

tilation and lighting included in the general planning.

If practicable, a cleaners' room, with running hot and cold water and large slop-sink, should be planned for each floor of the theatre, with space within the closet for hanging mops, brooms, dust cloths, dusters, etc. A similar room should be placed under the stage.

Boiler rooms should be located with special reference to street level, and to facilitate the handling of fuel and ashes.

The fan room—as part of the ventilating system—is generally located under the stage. (The elimination of noise from pumps, fans and fan motors necessitates placing these in isolated rooms.)

Motion-Picture Booth

The physical structure of the motion-picture booth is now almost universally regulated by law, as well as the number and size of openings, the character and type of shutters, windows, ports, etc., which are permissible.

The booth should be absolutely rigid, of sufficiently heavy construction to eliminate all vibration; its fire doors and traps should all work smoothly and as nearly noiselessly as possible.

It should be built to accommodate two machines, a spotlight and a dissolver or lantern-slide projector. In planning the booth, it is well to be as generous as possible in the allowance of room and ceiling height, as well as equipment of vents and exhaust fans to the open air.

To accommodate two machines, the booth should be not less than 8 feet by 10 feet with a 7-foot ceiling; three machines require about 8 feet by 14 feet. Observation ports should be about 8 inches by 12 inches, placed at such height from the floor that the operator, standing about 3 feet from the port, at his machine, can see the entire screen without craning. In many booths it is considered best to securely fasten clear plate glass in these ports as a fire guard in addition to the metal shutter.

The Electrical System

The writer believes that it should not be necessary, in this enlightened age, to emphasize the desirability, indeed, the obligation, of most careful planning and installation of the electrical system of a theatre; nor does he purpose writing a technical treatise on electricity and its control; but he feels it wise to call attention to

and discuss certain features which within his observation do not always receive the consideration they deserve, involving costly errors and oversights which may easily be avoided.

It is suggested that at the time the plans for wiring are made there be provision made for the laying of extra lines of conduit between the various parts of the theatre, and for extra switches to control wiring which may at some future time be laid in such extra lines. It is almost invariably the case that, after the wiring is completely installed and the theatre is opened, a need occurs for additional lines and outlets; it is much less costly to have installed extra lines and switch controls at the time of construction, than afterwards.

As a general proposition established codes, local ordinances and regulations cover in detail the type of construction which is permitted, and there is more or less uniformity in the codes in effect in various cities. Usually they are based upon practices recommended by the National Board of Fire Underwriters, and often they require the use of fixtures which have been officially approved by this Board. Regardless of whether or not this is a legal requirement, it is well to follow the recommendations of this Board, and permit the use only of such conduit,

cable, outlets, fixtures, etc., as bear its approval. The approval of the Underwriters' Laboratories is given only after exhaustive tests of the articles examined.

Though the electrician may laugh at emphasis being laid upon the point of seeing that certain obvious things are done, nevertheless the failure to make it a condition of the contract for the electrical work that these obvious things be done has cost many a theatre much money.

In wiring—all wiring—a careful estimate should be made of the load the wire is to carry. For instance, if it is the marquee or front sign that is being planned, the electrician should be THOROUGHLY posted as to what size of lamps will be used, and how many of them. Then, it is well to just about double the capacity of the wire, for the reason that as time passes we incline to the use of more and more light, and the system originally planned to provide for a certain number of lamps of a certain size, refuses to take care of the same number in an increased size. For one reason or another, it may be desired to use larger, brighter lamps than were originally planned, and it is well to design the original installation with this in view.

If wiring is overloaded beyond its accurately

estimated capacity, it will heat, burn off insulation, and perhaps set the building afire. Therefore, in ALL WIRING, anticipating that the future may bring us something different in lamps from those we are now using, as in the past we have progressed from the carbon to the tungsten filament, and then to the nitrogen mazda, the possible wish to use heavier, bigger lamps should be provided for, and original lines built that will carry, if desired, greater loads than first planned for. The difference in cost of original installation will be slight compared to advantages gained in later years.

Contracts for the electrical work should specify that the conduit, wire, switches, fixtures and appliances shall be of a type approved by the National Board of Underwriters, and after a contract has been made up, BEFORE its signature, it should be submitted, with a request for advice and suggestions, to the local insurance experts and to the local fire marshall, or other proper department of the city administration.

A few general suggestions in connection with the making of the contract for this important part of the construction work are submitted:

1st: Contract should only be awarded to a concern which is thoroughly responsible finan-

cially and is experienced in strictly theatrical work, or which will provide an experienced superintendent, familiar with theatrical installations, to oversee the work generally.

2nd: Contract should carry a clause requiring the contractor to be prepared to install his part of the work in such manner and at such times as will not delay the building or other contractors, and a clause should carry a penalty provision for non-compliance.

3rd: After completion of the work, and prior to acceptance, each floor, each main and each individual line shall be free from grounds, breaks or short-circuits; no branch circuit shall show insulation resistance below 25,000 ohms, the test to be made under supervision of a representative of the Board of Underwriters, city electrician or other chosen parties, in conjunction with the architect.

4th: Installation to be complete in EVERY respect, and any item omitted from specifications, necessary to the proper installation and operation of the equipment, shall be installed by the contractor without extra charge. (This puts responsibility up to the contractor for seeing that specifications are COMPLETE.)

5th: All conduit and conduit fittings to be of enameled, rigid type, so installed that wires

can be removed without defacing plaster, marble or woodwork. Conduits to be continuous from cut-out boxes to outlets, and of sufficient size to permit the easy insertion or withdrawal of wires, without injury to installation. All conduits to be free from burrs; to have watertight, red-leaded joints; to be installed, so far as practicable, after floor beams are laid; fastenings to be about 4 feet apart and secured by approved straps.

6th: At each outlet, flush switch receptacle, etc., approved outlet boxes are to be set flush with plaster line.

7th: Fixture hangers to be installed at each bracket and ceiling outlet to be of suitable and safe type, of sufficient strength safely to support the fixture to be installed.

8th: All wire used to be of hard grade copper, 98 per cent. conductivity, with high-grade, approved, rubber insulation. No wire smaller than No. 14 B&S gauge for circuits in front of curtain line, or No. 12 B&S gauge back of curtain line shall be used, and all wire larger than No. 8 B&S gauge shall be stranded.

9th: All work must comply in every respect with codes, city ordinances and with Underwriters' requirements.

10th: All temporary lighting and lights re-

quired during construction and equipment to be furnished and maintained by the contractor during prescribed working hours; overtime as agreed upon.

11th: Contractor to pay all costs of securing motor, lamp, wiring and installation inspections by the city officials and Underwriter's representatives, and shall be responsible for securing from the necessary sources certificates showing approval of the installation, and the architect and builder shall not accept the installation or consider contract completed until this has been done and the proper certificates turned over.

12th: All piping in front of curtain line to be concealed if possible, but on stage may be "open" or unconcealed.

13th: All panels to be of a specified gauge of metal, with self-closing doors fitted with snap locks and keys. Marbleized slate not less than one inch thick shall be used for mounting buss bars and switches; liberal wire-way gutters provided; bottom barrier to be set at an angle of 45 degrees to prevent bottom of cabinet being used as receptacle for miscellaneous articles.

14th: Specifications to be carefully and completely drawn by architect, checked by city elec-

trician or other proper official, re-checked by representative of National Board of Underwriters, and EVERY effort made to see that they are COMPLETE IN EVERY DETAIL.

We will now consider separately, the HOUSE LIGHTING, STAGE LIGHTING and INCIDENTAL ELECTRICAL SYSTEM:

House Lighting: Including front of theatre, lobby, foyer, auditorium, incidental rooms, and in general all lighting IN FRONT of curtain line.

Inasmuch as the failure of lights, wholly or partly, may not only ruin an act or a show, but may cause panic as well, emphasis is again laid upon the necessity of the house lighting system being of an approved type and in accordance with codes.

In recent years a truly wonderful improvement has been made in lighting systems and methods; in fact, the old style of direct lighting from ornate, elaborate, dust-gathering fixtures has become almost obsolete.

In general, there are now three recognized systems of lighting, termed respectively DIRECT, SEMI-DIRECT and INDIRECT. Of these the first-named is the oldest, and now-a-days the least desirable. It was thought that the direct system provided a hundred per cent of lighting efficiency, but it is now known that it does not;

furthermore, this system results in a spotty glare, deep shadows, harsh contrasts and eye-strain, and its only advantage is a slight saving in current consumption as compared with the semi-indirect and indirect systems.

The DIRECT system is one where the light is thrown directly outward or downward, with or without shades, the globes being exposed to the sight and reflecting their rays directly into the illuminated area.

The SEMI-INDIRECT system is one in which the fixtures reflect the greatest volume of light emitted against the ceiling or walls, but permit some of the illumination to be diffused through translucent mediums in the bottom or sides of fixtures.

The INDIRECT system is one where the fixtures are of the inverted-bowl type, reflecting light against the ceiling and walls, whence it is re-reflected into the illuminated area. This results in filling the atmosphere with a soft, diffused glow, yet no glaring point is visible to the eye.

A combination of the SEMI-INDIRECT and INDIRECT is sometimes preferred, beautiful effects being thus attained.

Another extremely effective modern system of using indirect lighting provides for the installation of the lamps behind ceiling coves, and

there is a splendid type of lamp with a half-silvered interior, which acts as a reflector, especially suited to this use.

A carefully studied, intelligently planned system of indirect lighting will result in a beautiful effect, well worth achieving, and affording positive eye-comfort to patrons. A theatre fully lighted, so that programs may be read with ease, yet without a single glaring point of light being visible to the eye, is something very attractive and is a potent proof of the modernity of the house. The soft, light-filled atmosphere shows ornamentation, draperies and fixtures to infinitely better advantage than does the glare of the direct system.

The use of other than pure white lamps should be studied; often a half-and-half amber and white lighting is richer and more effective.

For stairways, special lighting should be provided. Fixtures and lamps made especially for this use are now catalogued. These lights should never be turned out during a performance or while there are patrons in the house—turning them off may net an expensive damage suit. Therefore, they should be so arranged as to permit their use during dark changes, etc.

Expert advice is available on lighting questions from the makers of fixtures and lamps,

and it is advisable that the prospective builder avail himself thereof.

The "Exit" light circuit must also burn all the time the house is open, and this should be taken into consideration in arranging the circuits and fixtures.

In planning the theatre, provide liberally for electrical illumination of the front. A famous showman once said, "White paint and white lights will draw people, and flies"—and this is especially true with reference to white lights and many of them. The electric sign—or signs —on the front should receive consideration in the form of a liberal appropriation. As the reader knows, there are numberless different designs of "still," "reading" and "flashing" signs, and these range in cost from about $15 for the cheapest type of "still" sign, to thousands for the elaborate "reading" and "flashing" combinations. Concerns making such signs will gladly submit suggestions and prices. Do not build a beautiful, modern and costly theatre without providing a "front" that will attract attention and patronage.

STAGE LIGHTING: The impossibility of covering this subject in thorough detail, and so that every condition which might arise in any theatre will be treated, is apparent even to the

layman, but an effort will be made to handle this important department with an idea of suggesting standard practice, approved by favorable experience, and installations for the average well-equipped, modern vaudeville theatre.

We will consider first the switchboard which controls all the lighting on, under and about the stage, and that in the auditorium of the theatre, as well as the fan and ventilating systems.

This switchboard should be of marbleized slate of the "dead front" or "dead face" type, with extension copper buss bar terminals run to top for dimmer connections.

The "dead front" or "dead face" term means that switches are mounted upon the rear of the board instead of the front, and are controlled by handles on the front of the board. This eliminates the risk of short-circuits through actors or others leaning against switchboard or touching it with metal objects, etc., and provides against shocks and burns to individuals handling or coming in contact with the board.

No switch lighter in capacity than 50 amperes should be used, as the lighter weights will not stand up under the gruelling service required of them in a theatre.

EVERY switch should be provided with a name plate showing what it controls. These

plates should be of the "battleship" type; that is, dull black plates with white letters.

The swichboard should be located at least 3 feet distant from the wall, permitting sufficient working space behind it for the re-fusing of circuits, repairs to switches, etc.

There should be at least one pilot light on the front of the board, provided with shade so arranged as to throw the light directly onto the face of the board and not diffuse it into the area "on stage." There should also be a pilot light on the back of the board providing light for re-fusing, repairs, etc.

Ample switch facilities should be provided, that is, enough individual switches to afford the greatest elasticity and variety of combinations in controlling circuits, and there should be at least half-a-dozen surplus switches, for future uses, wired into the board.

Dimmers should be mounted above the switchboard, with sheet metal cover to protect them from overhead dust, etc. All operating handles should come on one level, within easy reach of the operator, and not more than 76 inches from the floor. Each handle should be enameled according to the color of the lights controlled, and having a name plate affixed to the handle indicating the control. There

should be a master-lever for each color, and a grand master-lever controlling all stage lights. House lights and fans should also be controlled through dimmers, similarly arranged.

Two types of dimmers are recommended: the Cutler-Hammer 120-step type interlocking; or Ward-Leonard 125-step type. Either will give satisfactory service, the latter being somewhat cheaper.

There should be separate controls for each floor of the auditorium, side wall brackets, beam lights, etc. These lights should be governed also by remote control switches, workable from push-button switches in the box-office and picture booth, and from some place convenient to the door-man, so that auditorium lights, in an emergency, may be turned on from any of these points. The control of auditorium lights from the booth should be practicable, as in the event of the house adopting a straight picture policy the expense of having an electrician back-stage will be saved.

Upon the face of the stage switchboard should be placed the signal controls, connecting with booth, orchestra and fly gallery, and at some point on the board or very close thereto, the opening of speaking tubes running to these three locations should be placed.

There should be a cabinet conveniently placed back of the switchboard, in which an emergency stock of fuses of every size used on the board, tape, lugs, plugs and connectors can be kept, available for instant use. In the electrical storeroom a stock of porcelain insulators, mica insulators, washers, binding posts, receptacles, switches, wire, etc., should be kept.

The stage switchboard is the heart of the electrical system of the theatre; it should be made the subject of very careful planning and construction.

Considering next the footlights, the length of the row should be 4 to 6 feet shorter than the proscenium opening. Universal semi-flush type construction, conforming to the latest Underwriters' specifications, is recommended. These are made with a metal trough for single or double row, into which the footlight proper, with receptacles completely wired, is placed. The trough should be painted with three coats of flat white. The lamp protecting hood should be of double iron, making it especially strong, and should not project more than $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches above the floor level. Lamps should be so placed that the light is equally distributed at the floor line as well as to the back wall, back

and up, and the footlight should be equipped with splicing-blocks for adjustments.

In two-row footlights, the top row should be devoted to white lights, the bottom row to the red, blue and other colored lights. Thirty-two 40-watt lamps (or the equivalent of 1320 watts) may be placed on one 2-wire circuit, and four 40-watt lamps may be placed single row to the foot. All white lamps should be of the 75- or 100-watt nitrogen mazda type; but only 40- or 60-watt mazda lamps on colored circuits, as the "colorine," or coloring matter, will not withstand the intense heat developed by the nitrogen mazda lamps.

In the center of the footlight-trough should be located an individual outlet, on a separate circuit, for use in plugging in a baby-spot, or any apparatus in the orchestra pit, which may be needed. This should, however, work through a dimmer. Sometimes this outlet is used for the watchman's light at night on the stage, but whether or not this use is made of it, the installation should be in every new equipment.

Considering next the proscenium strips—that is, the two strips placed up and down on both sides of the proscenium—these should be placed in coves provided for them in the construction of the proscenium arch, and usually running up

about 16 feet. Practical dimensions are 6-inch front, 8-inch rear, and 5-inch depth in trough made of heavy galvanized iron, and wired to accommodate 75-watt nitrogen mazda lamps, four lamps to the linear foot. In checking plans, care should be taken to see that the architect has provided space in the proscenium wall wherein these strips are to be placed, flush with wall and set at an angle to throw light equally toward the center of the stage in front of a drop "in one," yet masked so that the lights themselves will not be visible to persons seated in extreme end seats in the front row, or in boxes. Proscenium strips should work through dimmers, and be in four circuits.

Border lights, usually not less than four in number, should be two feet longer than the proscenium opening. The number of borders required will be governed by the size of the stage, but they should in any event be not more than 6 feet apart. The first one should be hung immediately behind the working curtain to illuminate "one" from overhead, and there should be one in each entrance behind "one." The width of the border should be such as not to require over one foot of working space for lowering and raising, the trough not exceeding 10 inches in width. Provide four circuits in each

border: red, blue, white and amber. The same number of lamps per foot may be placed in borders as in footlights and proscenium strips.

A new type of border light has come into use in recent years, for the new, high-powered nitrogen lamps. These are very practicable, result in some economy in current consumption, and so far no objection has been found to their use. In general, they provide three to five fixtures for each color, on a metal batten (1¼-inch iron pipe), in properly ventilated fixtures with shades that throw the light down and back, and with metal frames on the front in which colored gelatine mediums are placed. Particulars concerning this new type may be had upon inquiry of any of the manufacturers specializing in theatrical installations. The 500-watt nitrogen mazda lamp is the type most generally used in these fixtures, some using the 1000-watt nitrogen for the white lamps and smaller ones in the colored circuits.

Border lights should be hung on messenger cable, safely and securely counterweighted. Their structure should be of approved type; the one-time practice of having the local tinner make them, even if the fire and building authorities will pass them, is short-sighted and "penny-wise."

Bunch, spot, olivette, flood, bracket and similar special lights and effects are usually worked from stage-pockets and plugging-boxes. Hence, there should be, at each entrance, right and left of the stage, and at the rear center, a four-section stage-pocket, three of the sections being wired for the incandescent circuit, and one for the direct, or arc-light, circuit. These should be connected to work through the dimmers. One double-arc pocket should be placed at each side of the proscenium bridge, and there should be two to four arc pockets and plugs for both sides of the fly floor. It is much better to provide sufficient outlets at the time of construction than to have to resort later to make-shifts in order to secure the lighting effects, which spectacular acts are likely to require. Further, it is well always to contemplate that the time may come when it will be desired to change the policy of the house, and to provide for COMPLETE equipment when building.

Sufficient lights should be placed under the fly-gallery floor, to light the stage for working purposes. There should be lights placed on both sides of fly floors, and aloft, above the grids. In the center of the grids, a 50-ampere capacity wall type stage-pocket should be placed, controlled from stage switchboard through dim-

mer. This should have plug and cable and connector, for chandelier or other fixture hung center.

Lights should be placed at the stage door, scenery-loading door, and of course the lighting in under-stage corridors, dressing-rooms, stairways, boiler, prop and other rooms should be in accordance with the needs.

For smaller theatres, there should be provided a sheet-iron box ACT ANNOUNCER, 5 feet high, 24 inches wide, highly ornamented, having ten or more compartments with white opal glass front on which announcements are painted. Announcers are placed against the proscenium arch each side of stage and operated by the electrician or stage-manager on a keyboard, through a No. 11 conductor cable.

For the better class of theatres, where programs are used, a monogram transparency may be countersunk in the proscenium arch on each side. Letters running from "A" to "O," with an "X" added, are illuminated at will by the electrician or stage-manager on a keyboard, consisting of a slate-lined iron box with knife switches and buss bar connection for No. 21 conductor cable.

The signal system of the theatre should include speaking tubes from stage to orchestra

pit and fly-gallery. There should be a small electric lamp flash-system, governed by a push button on the stage switchboard, from the stage to each of these points; and an inter-communicating telephone system, preferably installed in connection with the local telephone exchange, with stations in box-office, manager's office, superintendent's office, picture booth, stage and such other points as may be deemed advisable. With the combination of these three systems, there is every reasonable assurance that each part of the theatre can get into quick and dependable communication with every other part —an essential thing.

A night light, stand, lamp with guard, and about twenty-five feet of stage cable, with plug, should be provided for burning on stage at night, being plugged either into one of the stage pockets or the receptacle in the center of the footlight-trough, as is most convenient.

A word-diagram of the suggested arrangements of circuits and controls is herewith submitted. This may or may not fit the needs of the reader's theatre, but it may offer a suggestion or two, or keep him from overlooking some essential.

MAIN LINE TO STAGE SWITCHBOARD CONTROLLING STAGE

Footlights Borders Pockets Proscenium Grid Pocket	Through complete interlocking dimmer system.

AUDITORIUM

Main Floor Foyer Balconies Dome Ceilings Beams Spotlights Fans Brackets	Through complete interlocking dimmer system.
Exits Steps and Stairs	Separate control, connected ahead of main switch. (See note.)

MISCELLANEOUS

Orchestra Work Lights Dressing-Rooms Prop, Fan, Furnace and Other Rooms Fly-Gallery Gridirons Stage Door Loading Door Ventilation System Miscellaneous, as Booth, etc.	Individual switch controls for these and other miscellaneous lights.

MAIN LINE TO BOX-OFFICE SWITCHBOARD CONTROLLING PATRONS' ROOMS

Smoking Room Toilets Ladies' Room Nursery Cloak Room	Individual switches on sub-main to control these.

OFFICES, ETC.

Box-Office Manager's Superintendent's Ushers' Dressing Bill Room Janitor's Miscellaneous Rooms	Individual switches on sub-main to control these.

FRONT OF HOUSE

Lobby Marquee Signs Transparencies Street Lights Carriage Calls	Individual switches on sub-main to control these.

EMERGENCY

House Lights, as Auditorium Balconies, Foyer, etc.	Remote control to these.
Exit and all Step and Stair Lights	See Note.

NOTE.—Exit and stair and step lights should be connected to the house mains, both at stage and box-office, AHEAD of the main switches; that is, directly on both mains, so that if fuses blow either directly in switch controlling exit lights, or in either switchboard, the exit lights will still receive power from the other board and line. They should be heavily fused, so that under ordinary circumstances they will not go out during a performance.

In many cities, ordinances require exit lights to be fitted also with gas burners and burned throughout performances; in any event, it is the safest practice to make assurance doubly sure that the exit, stair and step lights will not go

out by providing every possible safeguard against this.

The following is a suggested list of equipment, which may be added to or taken from, as the needs of the theatre require, but it will provide a list to check against when planning purchases in this department:

ELECTRICAL STAGE EQUIPMENT

Bunchlights, wired for twelve 60-watt lamps, with 25 ft. No. 14 cable	4
Olivette lamps, with 1000-watt nitrogen mazda lamps and 25 ft. No. 14 cable	2
Color frames, 18 x 20 in. for use with above lamps	12
Gelatine mediums, 8 asstd. colors, 18 x 21 in	48
Spotlight, 6 in., taking 25-amp. on 125 volt. with 25 ft. No. 14 cable	1
Spotlight, "Baby" 5 in. with 25 ft. No. 14 cable	1
Lens box frames, 8 x 9 in., fit all spotlights	12
Color wheels, 5 colors, to fit either 5 in. or 6 in. lens boxes	2
Strip lights, 8 ft. galva. iron, wired for lamps 10 in. apart	2
Strip lights, 5 ft. galva. iron, wired for lamps 10 in. apart	2
Stage cable, Nos. 10, 14 and 18, of each	50 ft.
Electrically illuminated Fire Log, made of translucent material and asbestos, reinforced with metal, hollow for insertion of electric bulbs. Made to give a realistic effect of partly burned logs, can be secured in several sizes, built and especially suited for theatre fire places	1
Colorine, for staining lamps, in following colors: Red, Amber, Green, Blue, Pink and Purple, of each	1 pt.
Bell, push button and battery, for effects	2

The stage electrician should always have on hand for emergencies a supply of the following:

Receptacles, sockets, wire, switches, porcelain rollers, and insulators, tin cups for same, mica insulators and washers, binding posts, tape, fuses, lugs, plugs, connectors, etc., etc.

Miscellaneous. Cleaner's stand, topped with 5-light cluster and 50-foot cable. These stands may be had with one, three and five lights, the latter being preferable. The base is solid and the cleaners carry the apparatus about the house when cleaning. Saves much current.

Musicians' stands, portable and adjustable, for each musician, and a stationary stand of proper height, with an additional shelf for music and instrument, for the leader. Each stand equipped with tin hood and lamp socket held by outer shell. Entire socket enclosed in tin shade, with operating key extending through slot in tin hoods through which light is thrown onto music.

In balcony or gallery at front rail (if spotlight is not placed in booth) locate one 4-section arc panel, which allows the working at this point of four spotlights or effect lamps.

Purchase one of the new style Long Distance Spotlights. This lamp is designed to give a clear 8-foot spot, or a 20-foot spread at 100 feet. It consumes 35 amperes at 125 volts. This lamp may either be set at the front rail of the balcony or gallery or placed in picture booth. Furnish the operator with an adequate supply of lens box frames, gelatine mediums

and color wheels, as listed in "Electrical Stage Equipment."

Decoration

It may be considered that the design of the theatre involves also the scheme of decoration adopted, and the author submits a few general color schemes that are known to be not only in good taste and effective, but to "wear well."

Color schemes and method of working: The combination of ivory, gray and old-rose, properly balanced, makes a warm, cheerful interior. Ceiling surfaces may be laid in in grays with ornamental parts in glazed ivory, certain panels and ornaments to be picked out in gold, metal leaf or bronze, and the recessed parts in old-rose. Mural decorations should be used in appropriate locations, the subjects being historical or allegorical, but in any case in harmony with the purpose of the theatre. This work is done first upon muslin canvas with oil paints, and then applied to the surfaces, and should be executed by experienced mural painters.

The modern practice of finishing walls is to cover them with fabric, either silk or damask, though paper may be used. Canvas may be

laid on and painted in imitation of silk, or the walls may simply be finished up in oil paints, flat or glazed.

Mouldings and friezes should be painted in the same tones as ceilings, but in darker tints.

Standards in the ivory, gray and old-rose scheme should be bronzed and glazed with antique finish; seats upholstered with either gray or old-rose, draperies a deep old-rose or dark rich red, carpets gray, exit doors bronzed and antiqued.

Here follows a list of other tried (not experimental or theoretical) combinations:

Drab, old-ivory and gold; wall coverings, painted surfaces or panels on walls in a rich gold tone, friezes drab, woodwork ivory enamel, draperies moss green, standards ivory, seats moss green, carpets a deeper green.

Cream, russet and gold; walls russet, woodwork glazed deep russet, draperies old-blue, standards deep russet, seats blue leather, carpets brown. Various tones of gold make a rich-looking house; metal leaf should be invariably used, not bronze. With mural decorations in deep colors, this scheme creates an Oriental effect.

Pearl gray, royal purple and gold; walls royal purple, draperies deep purple with gold

appliqué, standards Circassian, seats pearl gray, carpets burnt orange or dull gold. Autumn tones will make a beautiful, refined interior.

Gray, old-gold and mulberry; walls old-gold, draperies mulberry, standards gold, seats old-gold, carpets a warm gray.

Yellow, gray and lavender; walls yellow, draperies old-gold, standards same, seats gray, carpets gray-green.

Cream, gray-green, white and peach; walls gray-green, draperies peach, standards white enamel, seats peach, carpets drab.

French gray and Pompeiian red; in various tones; walls Pompeiian red, draperies French gray, standards same, seats red leather, carpets deep green.

Brown, russet and old tapestry tints; walls tapestry, draperies same, standards brown, seats russet, carpets red-brown.

Ivory, tan and robin-egg-blue; walls tan, draperies blue, standards ivory, seats blue, carpets brown.

Lavender, pink and white; walls pink, draperies lavender, standards white, seats gray, carpets moss green.

Peacock color scheme; walls gold-brown, draperies peacock-blue, standards black, seats peacock-green, carpets gold-brown.

Wainscotings of scagliola with walls of tapestry in the various combinations are often used to good advantage.

As a general proposition the ends of economy are served by doing all painting in oil, taking care that walls are not "green" when painted; though water-color may be used to good advantage on ceilings.

The cost of decorating a theatre depends upon size, material used and effects desired. If re-decorating an old house, photographs of interiors, submitted to established decorating concerns, will secure estimates of cost with suggested schemes and effects. If a new theatre, the architect and builder should be in touch with the decorator before construction is started.

The asbestos curtain should be painted by whatever concern decorates the theatre, so that this will harmonize with the rest of the house.

Seats and Installation

Theatre chairs are a costly part of the equipment of a theatre; therefore the kind, style, size and installation should be well observed. In buying theatre chairs, the following points should be noted:

Standards or *Castings.* If these are frail or badly constructed, the chair is undesirable, re-

gardless of upholstering or appearance. In considering the standards, include all iron or steel parts, such as hinges, brackets, wings, ties, etc. If the appropriation allows, what is known in theatre chair factories as the indirect type should be purchased, the price depending, if cast iron, on the weight of the iron; and if steel, the gauge and amount of steel used.

A direct type casting is one in which the back fits in a groove in the standard and is held by a very small piece of steel, or cast iron, the standard forming part of one side of the hinge. Formerly this type was unknown except in the cheapest gallery chairs, but since theatre builders often demand show and flash and do not put value first, theatre chair factories have adopted this construction in chairs with expensive backs, seats, etc. (See Plymouth and Broadhurst Theatres, New York City, for examples of this type.) Any faulty details in installing, uneven floors or heavy wear and tear throw all the weight and strain on a common stove bolt 3½ inches long by ¼ inch to 3/16 inch diameter. The direct seat hinge has a very limited adjustment for curved seating, which subjects it to greater strain.

The indirect type, costing from 75 cents to $1.25 additional per chair, has a separate heavy

cast iron or steel piece known as a wing which bolts to the standards and fastens to the back. This gives greater depth in the chair, holds the back more securely and helps equalize any unevenness of floor or other unusual condition. The indirect seat hinge is furnished with a separate piece usually called a "bracket." This bracket allows plenty of freedom for adjustment to fit almost any curve, permits free and perfect operation of the hinge and takes care of unevenness in floors so that this but slightly affects the perfect operation of the hinge. There are also semi-direct hinges on the market, some of which have wings and direct hinges and some no wings but indirect or bracket hinges. These are inferior to the indirect. Cast iron standards and heavy steel wings, brackets, seat arms and hinges are (in the author's opinion) the best combination. Cast iron should be in the standard for rigidity so there will not be a constant working and tugging on the floor screws, and steel should be used for cross strains. The steel will not break under cross strain as readily as cast iron. Further, the brackets held by more than one bolt are much superior to those held by the single bolt so often used.

The standard which the seating factory intends to supply for the middle chairs should

be examined, as well as the heavy artistic aisle standards on the samples. A row of ten chairs contains two aisle standards and nine middles which are very different from the aisle standards and usually not seen by the purchaser until the chairs are installed.

Seats, according to cost, naming the cheapest first:

1. *Squab or Stuffed Seat:* Filled with tow, cotton layer on top. Framed in on three sides. No frame on rear.

2. *Squab Spring Seat:* Same as No. 1, with 5 springs or more. As springs shift during use and this seat is not framed on rear, insides usually slide toward rear, are put out of place and in time allow springs to turn up on edge. This type of seat is a poor investment.

3. *Box Spring Seat:* Framed on all four sides. This is the best seat for service and continuous comfort. Made with 5, 6, 7, 8 or 9 springs. Heavy steel strips holding springs on bottom should be insisted upon.

4. *Auto or Mattress Spring Seat* (sometimes called Spring Edge Seat): No wood framing of any kind. Edges are nearly

pressed together when sat upon, allowing great strain on covering material when weight on springs is released. Best type has twelve springs, round wire mesh frame on top, to which springs are metal fastened and steel strips holding at bottom. Welt edge should be specified, for this type does not stand up like box spring seat.

False bottom seats which appear very thick but are not entirely filled with upholstering material, having a partition inside and thin padding on top, should be avoided. They keep their shape but are inferior to plain wood seats in use.

If it is intended to use plain veneer seats (without upholstering) 5-ply ½ inch thick, plain roll or full roll should be specified. 5-ply can be furnished 5/16 inch thick much cheaper, so the distinction should be made as to thickness.

Wood armrests range in price from 10 cents to 40 cents per chair, depending on thickness of wood, machine work, or hand carving. This is to be considered in comparing prices. Almost any style or priced armrest can be put on any style or priced chair, according to the buyer's

taste and in keeping with the balance of the chair.

Of backs there are many types and prices, some of which are described in upward order of cost:

Plain Veneer (no upholstering): Anything less than ½ inch thick 5-ply (unless edges are all protected by iron) should not be considered except where shortage of money makes it necessary. Practically all shapes can be had for the same price. Backs 19 inches high are cheaper than 20 inches. Height must be taken into consideration when buying.

Added Panel or Pleated Panel Backs: This is a plain veneer back with separate veneer panel thinly upholstered and applied against face of veneer back and held in place by four screws from rear. Margin of 1 inch or 2 inches of plain veneer back left exposed for frame.

Inserted Panel Back: A veneer back, say 6-ply thick, is taken and three plies cut out in center. Light padding and covering is put on the three plies cut out and, when uphol-

stered, set back in place, fitting flush with face of wood left for frame.

Full Upholstered Backs: A veneer back with framed edges. Upholstering material is placed inside of frame and the covering then drawn over the entire front face of back and around frame. The covering is then fastened to the back with what is known as "tack and gimp" or concealed or tackless fastening. In "tack and gimp" fastening, the edge of the material covering is simply tacked on the edge of the veneer backing, and a strip of the upholstering material tacked around to conceal the raw edges. This method, while cheapest, is unsatisfactory, as the covering very easily pulls away from the tacks. Also, the gimped edge tempts patrons to pick at it. The "concealed or tackless" fastening consists in drawing the upholstering material completely around the edges of the back and fastening onto the rear, an extra veneer being then screwed on the rear of the back. This method gives better appearance and service. Springs can be used with this type of back for a cushion effect, adding to the cost of the back, but giving very little, if any, additional comfort.

Imitation Leather. Despite many different trade names for imitation leathers, the quality of the various makes is about the same. "Spanish Imitation Leather" is grained, and most nearly resembles genuine leather in appearance and durability, costing but a few cents more per chair than other imitations. "Sateen Backing" or other non-ribbed material should be specified for rear covering.

Velour, Tapestry, Mohair or *Panne Plush.* These come in so many different qualities that it is advisable, if any one of them is to be used, to have samples submitted and passed upon by an expert. These materials are named above in order of wearing quality and cost, velour being the cheapest and least durable.

Hardware: The cost of chairs can be reduced from 5c to 50c each by the use of inferior bolts, screws, etc. The best construction is obtained by use of nickel-head bolts, where wood parts are fastened to metal or other wood parts. Stove bolts may be used at a lower cost but cheapen the appearance of the chair, the edges becoming rough very soon and catching in clothing. Where screws are used, "piano screws" are preferable, as the slot does not rough up. Hat-wires which fasten in three

places, namely, on each side of the bottom of the seat and in the rear, are best. Some hat-wires are fastened on two sides only, and in this case it is easy for the person in the seat behind to break them off with his feet. If number and letter plates are desired, this should be specified in the contract for chairs.

Box Chairs: Very often the seats in this section of the house, and in the loggias, are not chosen with reference to securing maximum comfort in a minimum space.

The chair that has become almost standard for use in these locations is the Austrian bent-wood type priced from $36 up per dozen. Heretofore the imported chair has been the most satisfactory, but during the war American manufacturers have to some extent specialized in the manufacture of this type, and very satisfactory domestic makes may now be secured.

These are available in period designs, with cane, spring or upholstered seats, in practically any color combination. The cost varies according to finish, gold increasing the price about $20 per dozen, stained finishes about $9 per dozen and enamel finishes, which require three well applied coats, about $24 per dozen.

Wicker and fiber chairs, though not infrequently used, are unsatisfactory, occupying more room and soon becoming rickety. Box and loggia chairs are subjected to harder usage than the ordinary chair, and should be purchased with this in mind.

Not a little may be done in the way of "dressing up" the house by choosing box chairs in good taste; it is suggested that the purchaser get in touch with someone who can advise him as to what the possibilities are of changing the design without materially increasing the cost, when buying either bentwood or any other standard chair.

Installation

It is most important that the chair manufacturer be responsible for the setting of the chairs. The average width of seats is 18 inches to 22 inches. The distance from back to back is from 30 inches to 34 inches, usually governed by the local codes or building regulations.

The average width of aisles is 30 inches to 36 inches at the first row of seats, increasing 1½ inches every 5 feet up to and including the last row, although in some cities the building code permits an entire aisle being but 3 feet

wide for its entire length. Side aisles are usually 30 inches to 36 inches wide at first row, increasing in width as do the center aisles. These measurements are also governed by building codes. A theatre between 60 and 90 feet in width should always have two center and two side aisles laid out in what is known as left, center and right sections.

The usual code governing the number of chairs to a row is:

"There shall not be more than six chairs between any one chair and an aisle, which means fourteen chairs are permissible to a row in center bank between the two center aisles, and not over seven chairs between any aisle, and the boxes (having no aisle) or between an aisle and a wall."

Installing Seats

In the installation of seats on concrete floors, No. 1420 ¼-inch machine screws should be used, two to each leg of the standard. The expansions are set and fitted into holes in the cement floor, drilled with a 9/16-inch drill.

The reason for using only two expansions and screws instead of four in the leg of each standard is that if one of the screws becomes loose through drilling, weakness of cement or improper installation of expansion shells, it can loosen only the one other screw instead of three, and permits the drilling of two entirely new holes, and putting in two new expansions in the opposite corners of the base of the standard.

The cement in theatre floors for good holding qualities should consist of 4 parts cement and 6 parts sand or two parts sand to one part cement. The top coating of cement floors must be fully two inches of finished cement, and stand at least six days before being drilled.

All seats should be fastened securely and gone over two or three times with a 2-inch extension screw driver and brace. Inferior expansion shells should not be used; the best one made is a "U. S." The U. S. expansion bolt is much more easily extricated than other makes. All arms must be screwed fast, or they will promptly become loose, particularly if simply secured by a rubber nail.

No warped backs should be permitted to slip in, as a back that has already begun to warp will continue its evil course; the veneer will then splinter, making the management liable to a possible suit for torn clothing. When bolts and screws are used, no jagged ends should be exposed which might tear clothes. All the screws that show or come through should flush clean and clear.

The installer of seats should not leave any torn places in any cloth-covered seats, or any tears or defects in leather-covered seats; it should be understood that liquid veneer or a

light furniture polish is only a temporary covering for serious scratches or deep indentations.

No manager should expect to make a 200-pound patron feel comfortable in an 18-inch chair, and if it is absolutely necessary to fill out a row or number of rows with 18-inch or 19-inch chairs, they should be, so far as possible, all in the same seat numbers, although in different rows, so that the box-office man, knowing their location, may use judgment and place stout patrons in wide seats, and the lean ones in 18-inch and 19-inch seats.

The average theatre builder, when ordering seats, does not take into consideration the condition and architectural area of the floor. As a rule, theatres have three sizes of seats, and possibly four. This is usually necessary to equalize the number of seats in a row with the floor measurements and the required width of aisles. It is unwise, for the sake of increased capacity, to place chairs behind columns or large posts, as this only creates complaints at the box-office, and arouses antagonistic feelings in the patron who has been seated where he can see little or nothing of the stage.

Numbering Seats: The modern method of numbering seats to effect the seating of patrons with the greatest ease and rapidity is:

Number the left bank with odd numbers: 1-3-5-7-9, etc.

Number the right bank 2-4-6-8-10, etc.

Number the seats in the center bank, beginning with center left aisle-seats, with odd numbers starting with 101-103-105-107, etc., up to one-half of the number of seats in the row; number the center bank beginning with center right aisle-seat with even numbers, beginning with 102-104-106-108, etc., up to one-half of the number of seats in the row. If an odd number of seats should be in any row in the center bank—i.e., 7, 9, 11, or 13 seats—use one more of the even number plates than of the odd to complete the number of all seats in the row.

Carpets and Floor Coverings

In selecting floor coverings, it is well to pay as much attention to the make and durable qualities of the carpet as to its attractiveness.

The author believes the most durable carpet for general theatre use is the Wilton. *Wiltons* run in various grades, and are manufactured by a number of firms. The price varies from $2.50 to $4.90 per yard in three-quarter-yard widths, depending upon the grades and colors, figured goods, blues and greens costing 35c to 50c more

per yard than other colors. Plain colored carpets are more extensively used than figured patterns. Wiltons are made of long yarn worsted in short and high pile. One of the best wearing Wiltons is the Hartford Saxony, as it is made of high pile and twisted yarn of finest quality; while the Rego Wilton, made by The Hardwick & McGee Company, is of much shorter pile, containing a mixture of cotton in the yarn, but one of the most durable Wiltons made for the money. The Rego Wilton costs about $2.00 less per yard than the Hartford Saxony. While there are many manufacturers of Wilton Carpets, the principal ones are The Bigelow-Hartford Company, M. J. Whittal Company and Hardwick & McGee.

Axminster carpets are probably the next best for general theatre use, and are made by many firms; the leaders in this line of manufacture are Alexander Smith and The Bigelow-Hartford Company. Axminsters run in price from $2.40 per yard to $4.25 per yard, in three-quarter widths. The author, however, cannot recommend Axminster carpet for theatre use, as in the better grades of Axminster, to gain durability and lasting qualities, the pile is unusually long, making it more apt to crush, hold

dust and dirt and show foot-marks than a carpet of closer pile and tighter weave, such as Wilton.

The next lower grade as to durability, is the *Wilton Velvet,* costing from $2.45 to $2.75 per yard in three-quarter-yard widths. The principal manufacturers of Wilton Velvet are Alexander Smith, The Park Carpet Mills and J. & J. Dobson.

Wool Velvet carpets made of short yarn can be bought as low as $1.75 per yard, but are not serviceable.

It is advisable to learn the manufacturers' names in buying carpets and to be careful to ascertain whether a certain grade of carpet is yarn-dyed or printed. Printed colors are worthless for theatre use.

Cork Carpet and *Linoleum* are more suitable for public buildings and churches than for the better class theatres, since they lack attractiveness, and do not usually look clean. Cork carpet is pliable, noiseless and easy in tread; it is also a non-conductor of both heat and cold, and makes a worthy floor covering for the somewhat smaller houses. The price per square yard varies from $1.50 to $2.00 in sizes two yards wide by seventy to eighty feet long.

Battleship Linoleum, while the better quality is as thick as cork carpet, is much firmer and lacks the flexibility and softness of cork carpet. This comes in three colors: brown, green and tan, and the prices average from $1.75 to $2.50 per square yard.

Carpet Linings: Architects, builders, owners and managers sometimes overlook a big factor when ordering and laying carpet—*lining.*

Lining costs from 6 to 18 cents per yard, and it is far better to use a double layer at 12 or 18 cents than to economize with a single layer at 8 cents per yard. The best lining, laid in double thickness, adds a whole year to the life of a carpet.

Laying Carpets on Cement Floors: The two most practical methods for laying carpets securely are: Drill holes in cement floor just large enough to take brass sockets tightly, into which are driven through the carpet 1½-inch steel pins. The same socket method, using 1¼-inch steel pins sewed to the under side of carpet, may be used. The latter method is less satisfactory if the carpet is taken up to be cleaned, as pins thus attached to the carpet are greatly in the way.

In case the carpet man fails to secure sockets and carpet pins in time, the seat man can drill

holes with a ½-inch drill in the aisles one foot apart on a line laid out by the carpet man. Any lumber mill will turn out the necessary number of ⅝-inch wood dowels, 1½ inches long, and the carpet man can drive them in the holes. The carpet then can be laid by using 12-ounce tacks to be tacked in head of wood dowels. The mill will charge about one or one and a quarter cents apiece for the wood dowels.

Both methods of fastening carpets to cement floors may be dispensed with if, at the time of construction, where carpet is to be laid, 2-inch furring strips ⅞ inch thick, are sunk in the cement level with the surface. Where the strips are laid in the cement, a 10-ounce carpet tack will hold the carpet. If the seating plan is correctly laid out, so that aisles are not changed in location or width after the cement floor is laid, the strip arrangement can be used in the aisles as well as around the edge of all base boards or in front of all doors at floor level.

Carpet is not being laid in many theatres between seats, except one-half width, which is 13½ inches, and in most of the new theatres having cement floors no carpets are laid between any seats. Carpet should be laid the full width of aisles.

The exposed cement floors should be painted with two coats of best quality brown or dark red cement paint, thus affording a clean, sanitary floor, and preventing the accumulation of dust and dirt.

The life and beauty of carpets may be conserved best by intelligent use of a first-class vacuum cleaner, one powerful enough really to remove dust and dirt.

Draperies and Hangings

The draperies and hangings of a theatre contribute touches of pictorial embellishment, and, if worked out in careful harmony with the general color scheme, and in subdued richness and tasteful combinations, add greatly to the increasingly important feature of every playhouse's decoration.

The price of Silk Damask and Silk Velours has so risen, owing to the cost of raw materials, colors, etc., that they have become almost prohibitive for theatre use, except in the very high-class theatres.

As substitutes, Cotton Velvets, Amures and Tapestries are being used more extensively. The various drapery and hanging materials are

here enumerated in the order in which they are most widely used:

Cotton Velvet or *Velour* is available in twelve to fourteen different colors, 50 inches wide, at prices ranging from $1.65 to $8.50 per yard, according to the quality. The five most attractive and generally used colors are: Mulberry, royal purple, gun-powder blue, mahogany and Du Barry rose. This grade of material is suitable for almost any part of the theatre, from the act or house curtain to the drapery or covering of exposed fire-hose reels. When used for portières, it should be lined with sateen, as nearly as possible the same color, and when used for the house curtain, should be lined with heavy denim.

The next most popular drapery is *Amures*, which makes good-looking hangings for almost any part of the theatre. It is double faced, 50 inches wide and can be secured in six to eight different shades, ranging in price from $1.25 to $2.50 per yard. *Mercerized Amures* average in price from $2.50 to $3.25 per yard.

Poplin comes in twelve different shades, is 50 inches wide, and averages in price from $1.25 to $1.75 per yard.

Rep comes 50 inches wide, ten to twelve different shades and ranges in price from 90c to $1.25 per yard. Both Poplin and Rep lack lustre and richness, and therefore are not generally used for theatre draperies.

Silk Velours are usually of heavier weight and richer lustre than Cotton Velours. This material comes in the same number of shades, and in the same width as the cotton goods, and ranges in price from $4.50 to $7.00 per yard.

Cotton Damask comes 50 inches wide, in ten to twelve different shades, and ranges in price from $1.60 to $4.00 per yard.

Silk Damask comes in the same number of shades and widths, and ranges in price from $3.00 to $9.00 per yard.

Cretonnes, domestic and imported, 30 inches to 36 inches wide, range in price from 25c to $1.25. The same goods 50 inches wide, from 90c to $3.00 per yard.

Wool or *Mercerized Tapestries,* 50 inches wide, often used for wall decorations, range from $1.50 to $9.00 per yard.

Cotton Tapestries, 32 inches to 50 inches wide, average in price from $1.45 to $4.00 per yard. This particular goods is used extensively for attractive coverings and hangings for lounging and retiring rooms.

Satin Brocades run in extra heavy weights, 50 inches wide, and run from $5.50 to $8.00 per yard; they are seldom used for theatre decorations.

Draperies for Inside of Foyer Doors on Glass

Plain Net (Ecru), ¾ yd. wide, 60c to $1.25 per yd.

Irish Point Lace (Ecru), ¾ yd. wide, $1.25 to $4.75 per yd.

Plain Chinese Silk (7 colors), 31 inches wide, 75c to $1.00 per yd.

Figured Silk (7 colors), 31 inches wide, $2.50 to $4.50 per yd.

Mahogany, crimson, dark red and golden-brown make attractive colors for this work.

Valenciennes draperies are made plain, trimmed with a braid of lighter or darker shade.

Draped or pleated valenciennes and heavy silk galoons are not extensively used.

Fixtures for Hanging Draperies and Curtains

Fixtures: Where it is necessary to place poles at orchestra pit, box doors, entrances to boxes and exit doors, and it is desired to conceal rings or poles, to any size tubing may be attached the "Easy Attachable Flat Track." The fewer poles and rings shown, the more attractive the draperies and hangings will appear. The day of a large display of polished brass poles and rings is fast passing. This track as well as all kinds of gimp tacks, curtain holders, bracket rings, escutcheon pins, curtain-pole sockets, brass rods, metal stair-plates, grommets, curtain weight-braid, etc., are seldom stocked by local dealers, but upon inquiry of the large drapery-fixture supply houses they may be secured.

CHAPTER II

EQUIPMENT AND OPERATION

THE author urges the reader, particularly if a new theatre is being opened, or one that has been closed for some time is being re-opened, to give careful attention to this chapter. Too often, in the multitude of details connected with the opening of a house, things of vital importance are overlooked, and it is rarely the case that a theatre is opened completely equipped.

The subject of equipment will be treated progressively—that is, by departments—starting at the front of the theatre and finishing at the stage door. It is, of course, in keeping with practice and experience to recommend the use of standard articles, as in the long run they are materially cheaper than inferior products. It is pertinent to observe, in this connection, that it takes a peculiar and particular knowledge of the requirements of a theatre to enable a manufacturer to

build articles or equipment especially suited to its needs. For instance, it is reasonable to suppose that a stage brace, manufactured by a firm with years of experience as makers of stage hardware, will be more desirable than one assembled by a firm with little or no knowledge of the strains a brace should be fitted to withstand, its practical uses, etc.

Therefore, the recommendations made in this article have in view solely the best results obtainable with minimum expenditure, on the season's or a longer term of operation, and are based upon an accurate knowledge of the experiences of many managers in many theatres.

Considering the theatre, therefore, from the standpoint of equipment required for its various departments in the order suggested, we come first to the

Lobby

As the "front yard" of the theatre, an index to the condition one may expect to encounter within the house, its equipment should be carefully chosen, complete and in harmony with the surroundings.

Photograph and other display frames, concerning which somewhat has been said under

the heading of "Lobby Display" in this book, should be selected only after a careful study of the catalogues of the principal frame makers, who through years of experience have eliminated the impractical, have corrected faulty construction, and have learned what will and what will not work out to the best ultimate advantage. In accordance with the size of the lobby and the display possibilities of the front, suitable frames should be ordered from one maker in a single lot. This will assure a harmonious equipment, and not a heterogeneous collection of odds and ends in varied finishes and shapes of moulding.

If the lobby is now equipped with an assorted, illy-matched lot of frames, no better investment can be made than to re-equip it with suitable and harmonious ones, bearing in mind, of course, that unless the surroundings are in keeping, the new frames are quite likely by contrast to emphasize the need for attention to the general condition of the lobby.

The advisability may be suggested of securing frames for hotel-lobby and about-town locations from the same maker and in a generally uniform pattern, as this serves to identify them with one particular theatre.

If a photograph or detailed plan of front and

lobby is sent to any of the well-established concerns making a specialty of theatrical frames, they will submit, free of cost, designs for frames and arrangements thereof, which will be of the greatest effectiveness for display purposes.

Rubber, leather, steel or cocoa-matting should invariably be laid in the lobby during rainy, muddy and inclement weather, from the door to the entrances. This will save carpet, for the patron generally gets the soles of his shoes fairly dry and free from mud before reaching the carpeted floors. As to what type of mats to use, the reader will be guided by his own judgment. The writer's recommendation is: first, the leather mat; second, the rubber; third, the steel, and last, the cocoa-matting. The first, while somewhat more expensive, is practically everlasting; it rolls and handles easily, gives the walker a very firm footing, and is being used in the better theatres almost exclusively. The rubber mat or strip, next in preference, is equally good except as to durability; the steel mat is noisy, trips patrons and scrapes mud off the feet without drying them—it looks cheap, but isn't; the cocoa-matting is cheap, looks it, soaks up water, becomes soggy, is hard to dry out, and does not wear well.

Another important item of the equipment in a lobby is the receptacle provided in which patrons are to throw cigar and cigarette butts, expectorate, etc. There is the conventional brass cuspidor, often unpolished and badly dented. Overloaded and overturned now and then, its filthy contents likely to soil the skirt of some woman passing, it has already been consigned to limbo by the more progressive theatres. In its place are found terra cotta or pottery umbrella stands, about one-fifth filled with sand, and conveniently placed about the lobby.

A brass railing should, by all means, be used to regulate traffic at the box-office window. This should not be made of too light a tubing, or insecurely set in the floor. It is the custom of patrons to lean heavily against it; of children to use it in acrobatic endeavors while their parents are purchasing tickets, etc., and it should be strong enough and firm enough to withstand such usage. It should be long enough to guide traffic past the window single-file, and sufficiently close to the counter so that two or more cannot crowd up to the window at the same time.

The outside of the box-office should have one or more frames containing cards displaying schedule of performances, prices of admission to

various sections, and stating the time up to which reservations will be held for various performances. Though it is customary to display this outside the box-office, it may also be displayed in other parts of the lobby, where every patron enroute to the box-office will be likely to see it.

The ticket-box for the door-man should be, in design and finish, harmonious with the other furnishings. It should be provided with a secure lock, to which the manager only should have a key. Various styles and types of such boxes are listed by the important frame and supply houses. As this box and its handling are an important safeguard against dishonest practices upon the part of the door-man and others, the need of secure locking is emphasized.

Each entrance to the theatre proper, that is, doors and openings from lobby into foyer, should be equipped with a velvet-covered 1½-inch rope, fitted with brass rings or hooks at each end, to bar openings not to be used.

Box-Office

The box-office should be thoroughly equipped with the latest approved devices for handling

not only the sale of tickets and the making of change, but as well the accounting, checking and storing of tickets, supplies, etc.

For the proper handling of money, an ample money drawer with good lock, an approved change machine, and a dependable safe should be provided. Also, for the handling of coupon-tickets, racks built with slots representing each reserved seat in the theatre; cabinet racks that will store, so they are quickly accessible, tickets for each performance two weeks ahead; reservation cabinets alphabetically arranged, of which four to six will generally meet requirements; conveniently placed spool-holders for reel-tickets. Ample storage space, protected by good locks, for stock of tickets, report forms, ticket envelopes, etc.

There should be an inter-communicating telephone system, and a convenient arrangement of telephones so that orders coming in may have prompt attention.

Waste baskets, sponge cup and sponge, shears, library paste, rubber bands and the usual paraphernalia of an office should be provided, together with statement of report forms, carbon paper, etc.

Foyer

Just inside the foyer door, or close to the ticket-taker, there should be a good-looking waste basket or other receptacle for the envelopes from which tickets are taken.

A carpet-cover of 12-ounce waterproof canvas should be provided, of sufficient size to protect the carpets in muddy weather. This should be long enough to reach from the foyer entrance to the heads of aisles on the main floor, and to the balcony stairs on each side, if these are located inside foyer.

If the foyer is spacious, furniture, hangings, pictures, etc., of appropriate style should be provided. Drinking fountains, dispensing pure iced water, should be placed in the foyer. Modern practice demands that these be of the sanitary type, and most well-managed theatres provide the individual paper cups for the patron's use.

Auditorium

In the main, equipment for the auditorium consists of the carpets, seats, lighting fixtures, etc., and these are of such importance that they are treated under separate headings.

There are the items of fire extinguishers, which should be of the type approved by the Underwriters' Laboratories; of fire-hose lines, which should bear the same approval, all of which should be placed on each floor in accessible locations. These are treated under the heading of "Fire and Panics."

Brass Railings. There is no question as to the beauty, richness and taste of the brass railing IF IT IS KEPT POLISHED, but keeping it polished involves diligent daily attention, which it is sometimes difficult to secure from the average cleaner. Where brass railings are used, as around boxes, stair rails, etc., it is advisable to use the plain, heavy-weight designs, avoiding elaborate decorative effects in railings, standards and brackets. It is often found desirable to use 1½-inch wrought-iron pipe, painted with standard iron pipe paint, wrapped with muslin and then covered with cotton velvet or silk velour of a color to match the hangings.

In some theatres a part of the main or balcony floor only is reserved, the balance of the floor being "general admission;" in such cases, provide signs so placed that patrons entitled to sit in the unreserved section will not seat themselves in the reserved seats. A very suitable

means of doing this is to use a 2-inch brass standard, rising 6 inches higher than the back of the chairs, with a brass plate 3 inches by 8 inches on top, bearing the inscription "RESERVED SEAT SECTION" neatly lettered in black. The bottom of the standard should fit snugly in a socket in the floor, and if it is desired to move the reserved seat section backward or forward two or three rows on holidays, etc., the sockets to receive the standard may be placed accordingly. This type of standard is of material assistance to the ushers in seating patrons in the proper section.

Bronze railings and those made of other metals intended as a substitute for brass and to look rich while eliminating the need for daily polishing, have never proved acceptable. In fact, the only acceptable substitute, in the writer's experience, is a velvet-covered iron pipe, which under ordinary conditions must be re-covered each season.

Manager's Office

There should be the usual equipment of office furniture: typewriter, filing cabinet, stationery, etc.

The telephone system (preferably of the inter-communicating type installed by the local exchange, rather than an independent system which in practice is out of order most of the time) should have stations in the manager's office, box-office, picture booth and on the stage.

Ladies' Room

Ample mirrored surfaces or mirror equipment; brush and comb, hairpins, plain and safety pins, a small stock of hatpins, a hand mirror and a box of talcum are necessities; and if there is a maid in charge, she should have on hand a bottle each of smelling salts, aromatic spirits of ammonia and Jamaica ginger, as well as a limited stock of sanitary napkins and a small flask of brandy. These latter items are for use in instances of fainting, illness, etc., and should all be contained in an emergency cabinet.

It has been found necessary to provide a special dressing-table, with a large mirror, for patrons to use when combing hair; if hair is combed over the wash-stands, plumbing trouble ensues. The maid should be instructed to forbid this practice, or a neatly lettered sign to that effect should be hung in the room.

Glass-tubed, nickeled automatic venders can be secured for dispensing sanitary napkins, which require deposit of a nickel, cost price of the napkin, before releasing the article; there should also be a nickel-plated or white-enameled covered container for used napkins.

A small, completely equipped First Aid Cabinet should be provided, with sufficient stock of bandages, absorbent cotton, lint, etc.

The furnishings, consisting of chairs, dressing-tables, lounge, settee, etc., and other appointments such as carpets, rugs and pictures, should be feminine in tone; light and airy rather than heavy and sombre.

The elaborateness with which furnished and equipped, the matter of providing a maid, and the importance attached to a suitable retiring-room for women patrons, deserve careful consideration. This is part of the "service" which the theatre renders, and should be properly done. If there is suitable space, a public telephone booth with suppressed buzzer or bell should be installed.

Gentlemen's Room

Another department of the theatre which, though not directly a revenue producer, never-

theless, if installed at all, merits proper maintenance and equipment. In a vaudeville theatre, where intermissions are not the rule, this room will probably not be much used, except in connection with its toilet facilities, but the expense of equipping it as a very small and intimate club might be equipped has in general experience been found well justified. Cuspidors, ash trays and an electric, gas, or similar cigar-lighter, with a few comfortable chairs and a substantial table, a durable, dark-toned rug and a few suitable pictures will generally suffice as to furnishings. Of course, this list may be elaborated, or reduced, depending upon conditions; but it is recommended that the subject be not dismissed from consideration without a thorough study of its importance.

It is well to install a public telephone booth with suppressed buzzer or bell in this room.

Toilets

Aside from suitable urinal (standing type) and seat facilities, the different types of which need not be discussed in this article, there are but three main important items in connection with the equipment of toilets, i.e., toilet paper, soap and towels.

There are several patented toilet paper holders, designed to dispense the paper economically and conveniently. Some of these are good, some not so good; the writer suggests as the preferable equipment in this particular, the Springfield holder and paper, the suggestion being based upon long and favorable experience with this type.

Comparing the bar of soap, liquid dispenser and apparatus which shaves a dry powder from a bar enclosed in the holder, the last named type has proved unfailingly satisfactory and economical.

The towel equipment, considering loose hand-towels, the individual hand-towel fastened on a nickeled rod and as used, falling into a boxed receptacle, the roller-towel (dirty, unsanitary and forbidden by law in many states,) and the patented paper-towel and receptacle, the last is efficient and economical.

There is also a new type of towel-holder which provides a clean surface of roller-towel to each user, the used or soiled portion pulling into the container. This is known as the "Pullclean Towel Cabinet," and is a practical, economical equipment.

Ushers' Room

The dressing-room provided should be equipped with ample hanger space, and hangers for uniforms when not in use. It should also be equipped with lavatory, mirror, brushes and combs, shoe brushes, whisk brooms and the items incidental to keeping clothing, etc., in neat condition. As ushers are required to be "spick and span" in appearance in the theatre, the facilities with which to accomplish this should be provided in the dressing-room.

This room should be frequently inspected by the superintendent or manager; order and neatness should be insisted upon.

In many theatres, metal lockers, with locks, are provided for the ushers in which to keep their street clothes while on duty in uniform. The plan is good; it obviates arguments when personal effects of ushers are missing—and tends to make each usher directly responsible for properly caring for his uniform. The practice in such instances is to require the usher to deposit the key to the locker with the superintendent when leaving the theatre, and secure it from him or his office when reporting for duty. This provides a check upon the coming and going, promptness, etc., of the usher.

Porters' and Cleaners' Rooms

Here should be provided ample shelf room for the storage of buckets, mops, brooms, supplies, etc. The supplies should be kept in a locked cabinet, by the head porter or janitor, who should be responsible for the issuance and economical use thereof.

Holders for brooms and mops, hangers for brushes, etc., should be provided, and it will be found that economy in the use of these articles will follow a rigid policy of requiring them to be kept in their proper places when not in use.

Here follows a list of cleaners', porters' and janitors' utensils:

UTENSILS

QUANT.	SIZE	ARTICLE
4	12-quart	Pails, galvanized iron, standard weight.
4	14-quart	Pails, pine mop, heavy arm.
4	standard	"Wundermop," complete with handles and clamps.
12	standard	Mops, "Wundermop."
4	No. 1	Wringers, standard metal lever or press.
6	Essex	Brushes, scrub.
3	Ajax	Brushes, scrub, triangular.
3	Dayton	Brushes, scrub, radiator.
2	Beekman	Brushes, sanitary, sink and cuspidor.
2	Essex	Brushes, water closet.
2	Carlton	Brushes, ceiling, 12" block.
2	No. C-2	Brushes, floor, 14" block, Tipperary, mule hair.
2	No. C-7	Brushes, floor, 30" block, Tipperary, mule hair.
12	No. 8	Brooms, corn.
3	No. 0	Brooms, whisk, "Reliance," small.
3	No. 3	Brooms, whisk, "Reliance," large.

4	No. C-12	Brushes, dust, hand.
2	X-large	Sweepers, carpet, Bissell, "Club."
1	standard	Cleaner, vacuum, Bissell.
6	20-inch	Dusters, feather, "Army and Navy," 200-tail.
6	Municipal	Brushes, dustless.
12	standard	Cloths, dustless, "Black Cat."
1	lot-assorted	Cloths, linen and cotton rags (from laundry and ragman).
12	pair, assorted	Cloths, scrub, Union Mills.
1	lb., assorted	Sponges, large.
2	24 x 27"	Chamois.
4	24 x 36"	Bags, waste paper, canvas, "Hudson."
2	3-bushel	Baskets, oblong, laundry.
4	standard	Dustpans, steel-edge, extra strong.
3	standard	Dustpans, galv. iron, swinging, with handles, "Waldorf."
3	assorted	Shovels, No. 2D Handle, No. 3 Coal Scoop, steel snow.
1	standard	Ice Chopper, or sidewalk cleaner.
3	assorted	Step ladders, hardwood, 3' 8" and 12', strong and light.
1	25-foot	Ladder, extension.
1	No. 0	Auger, water-closet, Wrigley.
1	standard	Plunger or force-pump, long handle.
1	48-inch	Truck, hand.
1	assorted	Lot of screws, nails, wire, hooks, screw-eyes, etc., for use in making minor repairs about theatre.
1	assorted	Lot of tools, hammers, large and small; screw-drivers, saws, braces and assorted bitts, plane, chisels, square, yardstick, etc.

NOTE.—The necessary portion of the above utensils should be turned over to the stage-manager, for exclusive use on stage, avoiding joint use by stage employees and house-cleaning staff of these articles.

CLEANING MATERIALS

All-in-One. This fluid is a combined cleanser, antiseptic, germicide and refinisher; will clean thoroughly the surface and polish as

well tile, cork, wood or linoleum floors, walls, woodwork and glass.

Dustol—10. *Also Dustdown—Dustbane.* Are modern hygienic sweeping compounds; sanitary, absorb dust.

Marble and Tile Cleaners. There are many kinds and brands, i. e., Wyandotte Detergent, Perfection, Old Dutch, Swift's, Gibson's, Marblica, Presto, etc., etc.

Soap Powders. There are makes and names in abundance, all claiming to be the best., i. e. Hanover, Swift's, Gold Dust, Pearline, 1776, Soapine, Washoline, etc., etc.

Metal Polishes. Liquid and paste; the names of brands are almost unlimited, Brilliant, Elk, Blue Ribbon, Bartenders' Friend, Sunset and Putz Pomade are but a few of the better known.

Floor and Furniture Polish. In this material it pays always to get the best; an oil that will not gum or stick and one that will rub down to a quick and clean polish. A few of the many are O-Cedar Oil, Alpine, All-In-One, Liquid Veneer, etc., etc.

There are numberless different brands and kinds of cleaners' materials, made of an endless variety of ingredients; no attempt is made to list them all, but rather a few known to the author as being thoroughly well adapted to and economical for the purposes intended.

An efficient cleaner may gét fairly good results from medium-quality cleaning materials, while the best cleaning material in the hands of an unintelligent workman may show poor results. All porters and cleaners should be instructed to follow the directions exactly as given, in the mixing, diluting and using of all cleaning materials, and should not endeavor to improve on these directions by using a little more or a little less than the instructions call for.

Cleaners should thoroughly wash all surfaces with plain water after using any soft soap, powder or acid cleaning preparation on marble or tile floors.

In scrubbing or mopping floors with water containing cleaning materials such as strong soap, lye, etc., care should be taken that this mixture does not come in contact with painted wood baseboard.

Check-Room

If a check-room is to be operated, and in most modern theatres it is considered an essential part of the service rendered to patrons, it should be properly operated, and this involves the employment of a cheerful, neatly dressed, willing and courteous attendant, alert and deft in handling the articles entrusted to him.

The department is important enough to warrant a special employee, not one from another department "doubling" in the check-room.

This room should be open and the attendant on duty from the time the doors are open until the last patron has left the house after the show, and the final duty of this employee before closing check-room should be to see that there are no outstanding checks, or that, if there are such, the articles covered by them are in the check-room.

It should be the invariable rule that no tips are to be accepted in this department; the service should be rendered gratis, and it should be seen to that the attendant does not "hint" directly or indirectly that gratuities would be acceptable.

Coats, capes and wraps should be hung on hangers, not slung carelessly on hooks; um-

brellas should be placed in stands, not stacked on shelves or in corners, and it should be made the attendant's duty to see that the supply of checks is maintained.

The superintendent or manager should inspect this department and its attendant regularly, and see that a prompt and efficient incoming and outgoing service is maintained. As patrons are leaving it is usually practicable to assign an usher to assist them in putting on overcoats, etc.

At some theatres the check-room is provided with a stock of umbrellas, fifty to a hundred or more, for the use of patrons who may be in the theatre when it starts raining, and who need an umbrella when leaving. Upon deposit of $1, they are given an umbrella, which is to be returned within three days, when the dollar is refunded. Usually this feature of the work is under the treasurer's direction as to accounting for the umbrellas—and at monthly inventories he is held responsible for having either the original number of umbrellas or $1 for each one missing. Some theatres handle this feature of their service through the box-office entirely.

A check-room will pay for itself within a very short time, in the saving effected by patrons checking wet, muddy garments, umbrellas,

overshoes, etc., which would otherwise damage seats and carpets. It is a not unimportant part of the service of the theatre, and should be so conducted as to make it a pleasure for patrons to utilize its facilities.

Nursery

If the theatre provides a nursery, and in modern practice this is usually considered essential even if not used extensively, it will create favorable comment as to the service of the house. It should be borne in mind that the little ones who will be taken care of in this department for an hour or two during the show MUST be kept quiet.

Therefore, a pile of clean, white sand, in a box about 6 feet by 6 feet, with sides about 8 inches high; an assortment of substantial toys, such as hobby-horses and similar rocking toys; two cribs with bedding; small rocking-chairs and lettered and numbered building blocks, should be provided.

The equipment should also include a small toilet seat, which can be used on the adult seat, unless, of course, the child's-size toilet is provided.

Bill-Room

This room, used by the bill-poster, lobby-decorator, etc., should be equipped with a large, substantial table, which can be used for cutting matt board on, etc.; liberal shelf room, and should be well lighted. It is not advisable to endeavor to equip it with the tools which may be required, for the reason that individual workmen have their preferences as to these and usually furnish them themselves.

Moving-Picture Booth

As there are a number of standard moving-picture projection machines, each with special claims for preference, and the theatre will be solicited by the representatives of each, no attempt will be made in this article to discuss the relative merits of such apparatus. It is urgently recommended, however, that only a standard equipment be installed, under supervision of the factory experts whom the makers of the apparatus will send for the purpose; or in consultation with experienced projection specialists, whose services will be at the theatre's command in the installation of this equipment. It is usually the safest practice to turn this entire

proposition over to one concern, under a written contract providing for satisfactory projection before payment is made for the apparatus.

In addition to the projection machines, there is of course the matter of rectifiers, transformers, switchboards, re-winders and such supplies as carbons, etc., upon all of which competent advice will be given gratis by the concerns specializing in moving-picture projection and equipment.

The fire-extinguishing apparatus should include only approved types; and a pail of clean, dry sand should be placed adjacent to each machine in the booth.

The spotlight equipment, color wheels and media, if spot is to be operated from the booth, should be a complete and approved installation.

A station on the inter-communicating telephone system should be located in the booth.

CHAPTER III

THE STAFF

Front of House

IN its general details, the managing of a theatre resembles nothing so much as the managing of a ship; there is more than the flavor of an old saw in the admonition to "keep things ship-shape." Eternal vigilance is the price that the manager, as well as the ship's captain, must pay in order to attain the highest efficiency and the best results. It should never be forgotten that the theatre draws people of all sorts and conditions; in particular does the vaudeville house draw from both the classes and the masses. A theatre should represent to the less favored of its patrons, something finer and more desirable than their ordinary surroundings; and to the better class, it should never present itself as inferior to the environment to which such persons are accustomed.

If undue insistence seems to be laid upon the observance of such matters as the cleanliness, decorum and duties of the personnel of the theatre, it should be born in mind that upon these seemingly unimportant details depends the tone of the house and that ultimately they determine the class into which the theatre must inevitably fall.

The Manager

Assuming that the theatre is fairly well located, is in reasonably good physical condition, and that the bookings are "fair" or better, the degree of success or failure which the institution achieves will depend largely upon the ability, personality, initiative and resourcefulness of its manager.

Here is a place where a "penny wise and pound foolish" policy is extremely ill-advised; it is rarely the case that a few dollars a week will not cover the difference between the salary of a real manager, with a reputation for successes, and that of one who does not possess either that reputation or the qualifications essential to achieving it.

The manager will have many problems to meet and solve, and the ideal includes some of the characteristics of the lawyer, diplomat, shrewd merchant, aggressive advertiser, wise executive, "good mixer" and gentleman. His mental equipment must be such as will enable him to cope promptly and intelligently with the emergencies which are constantly arising.

First. He will meet many of the patrons, coming into contact with them during their visits to the theatre, and they will, to a considerable extent, judge the house by its manager. He must be a gentleman in every sense of the word; the type of man who can and will make the clientèle of the theatre feel "at home" there and who yet will not step over the faint line which separates hospitality and friendliness from effusiveness and fulsome over-cordiality. His moral conduct MUST be above reproach —this goes without saying; for nothing will so quickly establish a theatre in a bad light with the better class of the public as gossip about the conduct of its manager; such as, constant visits to a near-by café, the late-hour café habit and association with people of questionable repute.

Second. He must be able to impress upon his staff the all-important point that unfailing, invariable courtesy to every patron, to fellow-employees, and to the artist, is essential to obtaining and retaining employment in the theatre. It is vital that he impress this upon his staff by setting the example, as well as by instructing them in the matter. He must be just and fair in distributing the work to be done, and, as in every other successful business, he must put all his subordinates upon the same plane as to promotions, increases in salary, etc.; i.e., based upon general efficiency only.

Third. It is absolutely essential that he cultivate friendly relations with the press, politicians, city officials, civic and other organizations, women's clubs, business concerns, the clergy and the public and private school heads of the city. Any of these may prove an important factor in the success or failure of the theatre, and no season will pass in which their friendship, having been cultivated and secured, will not prove of immense value to the business. It is desirable that the manager be himself a member of some of the better fraternal and civic organizations, though this is not absolutely essential.

Fourth. His relationship with the artists must be marked by friendly courtesy; he should make it an invariable rule to meet the acts as soon as possible after their arrival at the theatre; should inquire if their needs as to properties, etc., have been adequately cared for, and should exert himself to impress the artists with the management's desire to do all it consistently can to make the engagement pleasant and profitable for all concerned. It goes without saying that doing this need not involve loss of dignity or undue familiarity with any of the artists. Very little time and effort are required of the manager to do this, and the result will mark the difference between a theatre for which the artists are glad to do their best and one in which they merely go through the performances necessary to earn their salary. No investment of a little thought and care will return greater proportionate dividends than that put out in this direction.

Fifth. The importance of the manager's report on shows is often not realized, with the result that the proper information does not reach the booker concerning how the shows he is furnishing a theatre are pleasing its audiences. This is a point upon which it is essential that there

be the fullest co-operation between manager and booker, regardless of whether the theatre being booked is one of a chain or under independent ownership.

In the first place, the report should be rendered promptly after the manager has witnessed the two opening performances of each bill. The report should NOT be based upon the opening matinée only, but should invariably be the result of observation of the first two performances at least. Most booking offices and bookers provide the manager with a form upon which to make these reports, and in this case the manager has but to follow the form. Almost invariably, if objectionable matter or business has had to be eliminated from an act, the booker would like to know it.

The manager's report should be made absolutely without prejudice, should be free of any influence of personal feeling, and should be based upon his judgment as to the manner in which the act has been received by THE AUDIENCE. A report, free from bias, and made in an absolutely impartial manner and with a conscientious effort truthfully to record the degree of favor with which each act was received by THE AUDIENCE is an extremely valuable thing for the booker; it serves as a

guide to his further booking of the act for other houses, as well as an index of what types of act he should book for maximum results with certain audiences. The manager's personal likes and dislikes should NEVER, under any circumstances, influence his report. It must be borne in mind that each theatre in which an act plays is rendering a report thereon, and that though the act may be a "hit" in thirty-five towns out of forty, in the other five it may earn only a "fair" or even a "poor" report; it is the honest report, influenced neither by the previous record nor by the general reputation of the act, which indicates to the booker what the actual conditions are and enables him to judge intelligently the needs of each theatre. Further, it is often an indication to him that something is going wrong with an act, and it may be that through its agent or some other source the booker can straighten things out, and restore the act to its previous and more desirable standard.

It is often observed that where a manager books his own show, his report thereupon is ALWAYS good; now, though this may fool some other manager into booking an inferior act, it does not mislead him a second time, and it establishes for the untruthful manager an

extremely unenviable record in the booking office. It is true that no booker, or manager booking his own shows, invariably picks winners; it is a rule without exception that now and then, with greater or less frequency, poor acts are booked by the wisest of them; the honest report recognizes this fact and faces it fearlessly; the dishonest one seeks to cover it up and ultimately causes a loss of confidence in the maker.

There are so many reasons justifying the TRUTHFUL report, based solely upon the reception given an act by THE AUDIENCE, that these few remarks on the subject are worthy of careful and thoughtful consideration by the manager who desires not only to succeed in his individual efforts but also to gain the friendship and confidence of his booking connection.

Sixth. The manager's office hours should be established ones, and faithfully observed by him. It should be known about the theatre that he will appear at a certain time in the morning and that he is accessible in his office or elsewhere in the theatre from that hour until such other time as is established. There are many people in the course of the day who have legitimate affairs to conduct with him

which should not be left to subordinates, and a business so important as that of a theatre needs and should have no less regular attention than that of a bank or other commercial institution.

In the writer's travels, and during many hundreds of visits to and inspections of theatres, he has frequently found it the custom for a manager to come to the theatre about noon, or even later. It is suggested that this is very late for attention to be given to the answering of mail, responses to important telegrams that have perhaps arrived during the early morning hours, and for the many other matters that in commercial lines are given early consideration. It is a fact that this point of tardiness in getting down in the morning has lost for many a promising manager not only the recognition that otherwise good service might command, but also the confidence of his employers and, finally, his position.

No one knows better than the author that the hours are long; but that is an unchangeable condition, due to the very nature of the business, and of which the manager should either cheerfully take cognizance or get out of the game.

The example set the staff of promptness upon the manager's part will be valuable; a generally

increased efficiency will be noted in its work, and the business associations of the theatre will be much more pleasantly and profitably conducted if merchants and others can find the manager in his office during the hours in which all other business institutions customarily transact their affairs.

Seventh. It is essential that the manager visit every part of the theatre at least once daily, making a thorough inspection; that he make it a point to be in and around the theatre during every performance and while the audiences are entering and leaving. If the staff does not include a capable superintendent, the manager should make it a point to visit balconies during performances; if a superintendent is employed, this duty should devolve upon him. Frequently the balcony is permitted to run itself, with the result that employees in this and other seldom-visited portions of the house are prone to grow careless; this is in no small measure responsible for the ill-repute and general unpopularity of many balconies. Bear in mind that empty seats in a balcony return no profits, whereas, if those whose purse prompts them to patronize this portion of the theatre are intelligently handled, it will encourage oth-

ers to come, and thus the balcony may be made one of the *best paying* sections of the theatre. It costs nothing to do this, and it will mean much in the way of increased business on the season's operation.

Eighth. Tardiness in making reports, banking money or paying bills should not be tolerated. Perhaps more than any other business, the theatre is in a position to clear its financial records daily; that is, to know just how much business has been done, what the prospects are for the balance of the week or period of the play, and there should be no excuse accepted for slovenly habits with respect to these matters. A manager should be bonded in a surety company, for his own as well as the proprietor's protection.

Ninth. The manager should be very alert to the publicity possibilities of each show; he should be an aggressive but intelligent advertiser, bearing in mind that it does not profit the enterprise to spend two dollars on a special stunt for every dollar it is likely to bring into the house. An enormous "flash" one week, not followed by something equally spectacular the ensuing week, may result in a slump which will more than make up for the temporary increase

resulting from the "flash." There are times, however, when the "flash" may be profitably resorted to for general purposes, such as reawakening interest that has lagged, reviving business in the face of unusually strong opposition, etc.

Tenth. The manager should not be made to feel that he is nothing more than a sort of superior janitor. He should be given responsibilities, and if he is not capable of handling them and of meeting such situations as may arise, then he is not competent to manage a theatre. Save in an advisory way, he should not be interfered with in his choice and discipline of employees; if he cannot govern his actions wisely in this matter, it is another indication of incompetency. His employees must feel that he is the final court of appeal, for otherwise they must not be expected to comply fully with his instructions and to co-operate to the necessary extent in carrying out the policies and practices of the theatre.

Eleventh. The manager should guard carefully against getting into a rut; it is often the case that he does this when things are moving along smoothly, and gradually the entire organ-

ization, including the management, slumps. The successful management of a theatre requires that the individual doing it be "on his toes" all the time. He should forget there is such a thing as opposition, and never knock. The world hates a knocker and knocking re-acts in the other fellow's favor.

Twelfth. It is a peculiar fact that to the lay mind the theatrical manager is invested with a sort of glamor; he is likely to be made much of by those looking for favors of one sort or another, or by stage-struck girls and idle women. He should guard against becoming conceited, haughty and arrogant through these things; a condition quite possible, as the experience of large and small circuits have proved time and time again.

Thirteenth. It goes without saying that his personal bills, accounts and business obligations should be promptly and honorably settled; that he must be temperate in his habits and that his private life must reflect credit upon the theatre which he represents.

In conclusion, it may be said that there are not now and never have been enough real managers to go around. It is the experience of the

writer that those who have proved exceptionally competent are quickly recognized and rapidly offered promotion to larger theatres and greater responsibilities. But capable managers are being made, and each proprietor can help to make more of them by exerting his influence, so far as is possible, toward understanding and putting into practice the rules of conduct and performance which distinguish the thorough-going and successful manager.

The Treasurer and Ticket-Seller

The box-office is the heart of the business. If it does not function properly the enterprise is doomed, for it will avail nothing if the theatre does a big business but the money fails to get into the bank; it will profit little indeed if the efforts of the rest of the staff are discounted or put at naught by improper handling of the public at this important point. Take notice that EVERY PATRON of the house comes to the box-office before entering the theatre. Too much careful thought and attention cannot be devoted to this part of the theatre.

Too often a theatre is built without proper attention to the requirements of the box-office. Frequently the architect provides a beautiful

and tasteful front for it, but does not allow enough room for efficient work to be done behind that front. It is often illy-lighted and almost without ventilation. It is frequently so cramped for space that the ticket-seller's very elbows are crowded to his sides. These conditions should not exist.

The treasurer comes into direct contact with every patron of the house; it is to him that the clients look for courteous and attentive service; it is the treasurer who, to many, is the theatre. Polished, genial, and beyond all smilingly courteous under any circumstances, the ideal treasurer is a quick thinker, a quiet-voiced and gentlemanly salesman who can dispose not only of the desirable seats, but the less desirable ones as well, and do this without deceiving the patron.

The public is often crochety and unfair. Frequently it is inclined to resent being seated in anything but the "sixth row center on the aisle," and it takes much patience, diplomacy and tact at the ticket-window to overcome this unreasonableness. The treasurer who cannot retain his poise and an unfailing smile in the face of an impatient, hurrying line is not fitted for the position.

One person is inclined to stand at the window in a waiting line to discuss this or that with reference to the seats offered; another crowds or pushes in ahead of the line and endeavors to secure preferred attention; still another is inclined to dispute the price of the seats, and so on without end; but the wise and able treasurer is one who has the knack of selling his line rapidly, quietly, efficiently and withal, politely—a smile and a pleasant "thank you" concluding each transaction, regardless of the attitude of the patron. A treasurer should make absolutely sure, in each transaction, that there is a clear understanding on the part of the patron as to which particular performance he is getting tickets for. If this is invariably done, many disputes will be avoided and unpleasant arguments at the door or with ushers prevented.

Coupon-tickets are usually printed in uniform length, though some ticket printers' stock varies in width and weight of card-board. It is advisable to get cardboard sufficiently heavy so that the imprint will not show on the back and the tickets will stand well in the rack.

It is not wise to select various shades of one color for tickets, as the door-man and ushers are likely to be confused thereby; distinctly con-

trasting colors should be used to differentiate location and price of seats. Sufficient racks should be provided to accommodate the current sale and reservations for one or two weeks in advance.

Reel-tickets are more readily sold from reel standards in rolls of two thousand tickets; these tickets should be consecutively numbered and have printed in plain type the location in the theatre for which they are intended.

A treasurer should cultivate the habit of knowing his regular patrons by name, and so addressing them as they come to the window. Small a thing as this is, it is very pleasing to the patron and is of material aid in influencing his friendship for the house.

There are no circumstances in which the treasurer should dispute with the patron; it is a proved fact in the most successful theatres in the country that here, at the very heart of the theatre, unfailing and patient courtesy and pleasantness secure almost unbelievable results in the friendship of the general public toward the house.

The telephone service in the box-office merits the closest attention; calls MUST be promptly and courteously answered regardless of conditions. People calling to reserve seats are im-

patient of delays and resent abrupt answers when they do secure connection.

Promises made in the box-office must be fulfilled; the rule as to how long seats will be held for a given performance should be positive and those in charge instructed that clients telephoning for reservations be informed that the seats will be held until a certain specified time only. This time limit should also be announced by a box-office sign. Exceptions may be made when it is known positively that the patron is dependable; if, in such a case, the promise is made that the tickets will be held until called for, this promise should be kept even if it involve the necessity of mailing the unused tickets to the patron the next day, and collecting for them. Persons entertaining guests are frequently late in reaching the theatre, and will be justly annoyed if the promised reservations are not held for them. A displeased patron is a poor advertisement.

The treasurer should understand the art of "dressing" the house on off-nights, that is, when business is not capacity, by selling alternate pairs of seats so that when the performance commences the house will have the appearance of being full. "Nothing succeeds like success," and the report of those who see the show that

the house was full will have a favorable influence toward bringing others to witness subsequent performances.

The less desirable seats in the high-priced section should be disposed of before all the choicer ones are gone, for certain patrons who come late will demand the best seats or decline to purchase. A few good pairs should be held until the last minute to cover any adjustments which must be made, or to accommodate a late comer of whom, for some adequate reason, it may be desirable to take specially good care.

The clientèle should be sufficiently well known to the treasurer to enable him to avoid seating persons of questionable repute next to those of high social standing; he should be careful not to seat the mechanic in overalls, who now and then strolls up to the window, in a section where he may be conspicuous to his own discomfort or to the displeasure of those about him. A drunken man or woman should be absolutely refused a ticket. This individual falls asleep during the show and snores; or he insists on talking to the persons seated next to him, or he becomes ill. In any event the chances are a hundred to one that he will spoil all or a part of the show for all or a part of the audience.

The ticket-seller should endeavor, so far as is consistent with the conditions, to dispose of the higher-priced seats first; often the sale for one performance may in this manner be increased in gross revenue more than the amount of his salary for an entire week.

The same courteous attention should be accorded the purchaser of balcony seats as of a box. The public is not compelled to come to the theatre; attending shows is largely a matter of habit, and it doesn't require many rebuffs at the box-office to divorce a person entirely from the habit or desire of attending a particular theatre. An unpopular theatre is a constant incentive to someone to build an opposition house that will be popular.

The ticket-seller should serve those in line in their proper order, and NEVER sell out of his turn the person who reaches over or pushes in ahead of those in front of him. A quiet request to such person to "Please take proper place in the line," WITHOUT shouting or rude command, should be the practice in such matters. If the line is at all extended, a special policeman should be on duty to keep persons in their proper places, prevent crowding, pushing and disorder. He should NEVER push people about, shout at them, or act as if he were

driving cattle. This sort of thing will be remembered and resented.

A box-office convenience worthy of installation is a system of registration for physicians and others who may be called during the show. A card, on hand in the box-office, is given them to fill out and is then handed to the usher. The usher marks in the seat-number and returns the card to the box-office. If a call comes in, the persons wanted can be quickly and quietly located. Even where seats are not reserved, it is wise to have them numbered and lettered for such purposes.

That the treasurer should be absolutely honest, bonded in a surety company, prompt in banking his money and making his reports, is understood. It should be an inviolable rule that he do not have visitors in the box-office, nor social conversations at the window thereof. Smoking in the box-office should be positively forbidden, likewise the chewing of gum.

The general appearance of all box-office employees is important; clean shaved, clean hands, well-kept nails, clean linen, are essential. An offensive or foul breath must be remedied. At night performances the ticket-seller should wear dinner dress, and at no time should he work in shirt-sleeves. Heat comes with the summer, it

is true, but this does not justify a coatless ticket-seller. Light-weight alpaca, linen and similar clothes are available then.

If the ticket-seller is a woman, she should be attractive but not too pretty, unless she is one of those rare exceptions who does not unduly value her good looks. Peroxide blondes have no use for other women, and too much attraction for young men.

The box-office should be equipped with a standard safe, for the *exclusive* use of the treasurer, and HE ONLY, with the exception of the manager, should possess the combination; the responsibility for the contents of the safe should be ABSOLUTELY clear at all times. A further reason for equipping the box-office with a suitable safe is found in the fact that in case of shortages the bonding company may take refuge in the fact that the treasurer was not equipped to protect his funds properly. It is important that the line of responsibility for the money be CLEARLY and DEFINITELY established at all times, and every precaution on this point should be taken.

There should be a change machine provided which makes change accurately and saves time in handling pennies.

A niggardly and insufficient salary has been

known to tempt men to dishonesty. The treasurer of a theatre constantly handles comparatively large sums of money, his position is one of trust and responsibility, and he should be adequately paid. In this connection, it is à propos that brief mention be made of some of the schemes employed by dishonest treasurers and which have cost proprietors thousands of dollars.

During a recent season, in a big-time theatre, through collusion between the ticket-seller and door-man, the following scheme resulted in the theft of over seven thousand dollars: The house sold reel-tickets for unreserved seats on the main floor; the door-man, instead of dropping these tickets into the box, as lifted, would hold out from thirty to sixty on each performance. At some time during the performance he would pass these back to the treasurer, who would re-sell them and appropriate the proceeds, which were later divided between them. A variation of this plan is for the door-man to put the tickets in some place where the treasurer can get them, as, for instance, in a toilet, or smoking room, or behind a partition or some other semi-concealed spot. The treasurer then leaves the box-office "for a moment," gets and re-sells them. This is an old, proved,

and very popular plan for dishonest employees. It illustrates the necessity for two strictly enforced rules: (1) *The door-man must never, under any circumstances, approach the box-office or converse with the treasurer during or after a performance, and he must deposit tickets, immediately after lifting, in a locked ticket box to which the manager has the only key.* (2) *If any adjustments are to be made, the patron himself, the manager or the superintendent must make them.*

Through collusion of usher, door-man and treasurer it is possible, even easy, to misuse coupon-tickets when performances are not being played to capacity.

If any other than the manager, *personally,* issues and signs passes, it is possible for the treasurer and door-man to make use of them dishonestly and defraud the theatre of many dollars. Alteration of passes from "two" to "three" or "four" should be guarded against by a rigid check of all that are honored.

The practice of "short-changing," though nearly obsolete, still offers many chances for the dishonest box-office employee. "Walkaway," meaning change left on the counter by the patron, should invariably be restored to him if he can be called back, or located.

The safe plan, and the one that is fairest to all concerned, is to insist that the door-man deposit all tickets and passes lifted, in the box, just as rapidly as they are received; that the treasurer have his report ready by the time the performance is over; that the manager personally, or by trusted aide, count the ticket-box AFTER EACH PERFORMANCE; that care be taken in the case of reel or strip-tickets to see that the treasurer does not use a counterfeit roll, and to exercise a keen and ever-watchful supervision over this department.

A sufficient change fund should be allowed the treasurer; the box-office should be open continuously from 9 a. m. to 10 p. m. There should NEVER be a time between these hours when there is not someone in the box-office prepared to sell tickets, answer questions or the telephone.

In this connection, it is well to note that the legal status of the ticket differs with the states. In some localities a ticket is regarded as a license and in others it is a lease. A lease may not be broken without redress. A license may be revoked at any time by reimbursing the holder of the license. It is best to have the tickets read to the effect that "This ticket is a license,

terminating at the pleasure of the management."

The Superintendent

This employee has been found necessary to the proper and profitable operation of the larger theatres in the larger cities.

In a general way his duties, under the supervision and direction of the manager, are to see that the theatre is kept clean—front and back. He should see to it that heating and ventilation are properly attended to, that burnt-out or missing lamps are replaced, that torn carpets, broken seats, squeaky door hinges, bad-order toilets, defective or broken fire-exits and such matters are given proper attention; and, by systematically and unostentatiously visiting each floor of the theatre and covering all parts of the front of the house during performances, see that order and quiet are maintained.

Cleaners, porters, janitors, etc., should work under his direction, and he should be held entirely responsible for the cleanliness of the theatre, lobby, sidewalks and exit spaces. He should be careful to see that the fire-prevention and extinguishing apparatus of the theatre is maintained in proper condition; chemical extinguishers re-charged at necessary intervals; hose lines

kept in thorough working order, etc. He should see that the motors on ventilating equipment are oiled at frequent intervals, that ceiling and other fans are cleaned and oiled; in a word, that the entire physical equipment of the theatre, including chairs, furniture, etc., is suitably cared for.

He should make a careful inspection of the entire front of the house prior to the opening of doors at each and every performance. He should call and rehearse a fire drill with the ushers, door-men and porters weekly.

He should look to the use of cleaning materials, such as brooms, mops, brass polish, etc., and see that economy is practiced by checking in and checking out all utensils and materials in this department; he should guard against the waste of electric light during cleaning hours, and in renewing burnt-out lamps, etc., at the request of employees, he should require that the burnt-out lamps be turned in in exchange for the new ones.

He should have had experience in handling crowds and know how to do so quietly and with discretion; to adjust little errors and arguments in a diplomatic and pleasing manner. It is not intended that he shall assume any of the manager's duties, but he should be an understudy

to the manager, and his chief aide.

In the matter of handling a patron whose conduct is unbecoming or offensive, it is the best practice to persuade the person to come out into the lobby, or into the manager's office, to discuss the difficulty, thus often avoiding the confusion of a noisy ejectment, and perhaps a damage suit. Disorderly individuals can often be persuaded to come out to talk matters over, and then the question of re-admitting them can be settled without disturbing the audience; if the offender is never to be permitted to enter the theatre again, the ticket-seller and doorman should be advised of the fact then and there.

The superintendent should be punctual in reporting for duty, thus not only setting a good example, but enabling him to see that everyone under his supervision is also at work on time. He should be uniformed during performances, and prior to the opening of the doors, should inspect the ushers and all other attachés of the front of the theatre, except those in the box-office. He should see that those under his charge are at their stations at the proper time, are uniformed, have clean hands and nails, shined shoes, etc.

It will be seen that he must be something of

a diplomat, so in choosing an employee for this position, look well into his record and select an intelligent, high-class man—ambitious, energetic and clean-cut, who is real timber for future use in a higher position.

The Door-Man

If a theatre is to enjoy the fullest measure of popularity, this is a position in which a conservative, well-balanced, dignified yet friendly individual is needed.

In general practice, it is desirable that a doorman be from thirty to forty years of age, if possible of commanding stature, and ALWAYS well-groomed, cleanly shaved, clean hands and nails, polished shoes and well-brushed uniform. He should be careful that his breath is not malodorous. He should NEVER shout directions at patrons. Tickets should be quickly lifted, *carefully* scrutinized to see that they are for the current performance, patrons quietly but clearly directed to the correct aisle (if this is not to be done by the head usher or superintendent), and the stubs or tickets deposited in the ticket-box IMMEDIATELY.

The door-man should be POSITIVELY forbidden to converse, or have transactions of any kind,

with the treasurer or ticket-seller immediately before or during the entrance of patrons, and to hold any long or unnecessary conversations with either friends or patrons while on duty.

The door-man should be commissioned as a "special policeman" if possible, and should be a man of sufficient discretion to know when and how to use this authority. He should never permit any person under the influence of liquor to enter the theatre.

He should, under no circumstances, be vested with discretionary power in the matter of admitting people who hold no ticket or pass. It should be distinctly impressed upon him that EVERY PERSON admitted must present either a ticket or a pass. Nor should he use the "I'll remember you" system of taking care of pass-outs. He should be provided with pass-out checks, give one to each person leaving during a performance who intends to come back during the show, and he should lift this check when the patron re-enters.

The door-man should be assigned morning duties around the theatre and, in the time available then, may save the salary of an extra employee.

A refinement of this position, and one that should ultimately make the man who occupies

it almost invaluable to the theatre, is his learning to know most of the regular patrons by name, and to address them pleasantly by it, as they hand him their tickets. In the handling of children, elderly ladies, infirm persons and so on, it goes without saying that tact, unfailing courtesy and never ending patience should be the rule.

On account of its importance, the author repeats the injunction that the door-man be carefully trained in the matter of being sure, *at the time he lifts the ticket,* that it is for the performance then being given. It is infinitely easier and more pleasant to adjust an error at this time, than after the patron has been seated at the wrong performance. Then the patron resents being called from his seat, and frequently a very embarrassing situation is created.

The Special Policeman

Though it is not the universal custom for theatres to have a special policeman on the staff, it is required by the ordinances in some cities; in others it has been found a necessary position to establish, and in general practice it is desirable to have a capable man about the theatre during performances, who is vested with power

to make an arrest if necessary, or who has legal authority to quell disturbances.

In many theatres it is the custom to secure a commission for the superintendent or doorman, which saves an extra salary—except in such cases as there is need for a special policeman to serve solely as such. The management will, of course, decide what the conditions require in this matter; but if a special policeman is employed, he should be in uniform, familiar with the rules of the police department and, preferably, a man who has had actual service therein.

This officer should of course be alert and watchful, stern in suppressing any disorder or unbecoming conduct on the part of any person in any part of the theatre; but he should never resort to rough tactics, for instance in effecting ejectment of a gallery patron; for unless the circumstances are especially aggravated, this is likely to bring about a damage suit. The officer should, if time and circumstances permit, consult with the manager before making an ejectment, for sometimes a little diplomatic talk will stop the trouble when an attempt at ejectment will precipitate a serious fight and absolutely ruin a show, perhaps causing a panic.

The special policeman should quietly and un-

ostentatiously visit every portion of the theatre several times during each show, keeping on the move from part to part of the auditorium, balcony and gallery and watching the lobby. As he passes through the various portions of the theatre he will see and rectify in a quiet and polite manner many little things which, if not checked then, may lead to disagreeable incidents later on. By merely standing in a side aisle near the offender, silent watchfulness may have the desired effect.

While the gallery is usually the place most likely to require attention, it should be remembered that intoxicated men get by the ticket-seller and door-man, and when seated in the warm theatre become talkative and boisterous. The time to catch these things is, of course, before the individual gets into the theatre; for a drunken man, if discovered, should never be permitted to enter.

It is a peculiar fact that disturbances always seem to start just at a moment when the manager, superintendent and head usher are engaged elsewhere, and the alert officer should be another check on these things.

The habit of many officers, standing about gallery or other entrances, discussing politics or some other subject with a door-man or outsider,

should be sternly discouraged. A quiet, determined, efficient and polite man, who can tell the difference between a gentleman and a rowdy, and will use discretion and judgment in handling both, makes the ideal officer.

The Ushers

These are important employees and too much care cannot be devoted to their selection. If boys are employed, they should be between the ages of seventeen and twenty; if girls, between twenty and twenty-eight. Boys should not be loafers or cigarette fiends, and the character of the girls should be above question. The writer has often found it possible to secure a corps of young married women, and invariably these have proved the very best type to use in this position. Boys are boys and inclined to pranks and play while on duty, often to undue familiarity with patrons and other short-comings in handling the public. Girls working for a little "pin money" do not need the position badly enough, as a rule, to take good care of it, while the young married women are frequently helping a husband in the purchase or outfitting of a home, or some such matter. In general, they want the work for the money there

is in it, and are more amenable to rules and more careful in observing instructions.

Ushers should be carefully and thoroughly trained in their duties; after a few weeks in one station in the theatre they should be changed to another and so on until each usher is qualified to work at any station in the auditorium.

Extreme neatness should characterize their appearance: hair neatly dressed; shoes polished; stockings free from holes or "runs" about the ankles. They should NEVER chew gum while on duty. They should report in a body to the superintendent or manager at least ten minutes before the doors are due to open, for inspection. If boys are employed, smoking, laughing or playing on duty should be cause for instant dismissal. There should be a standing rule of "NO TIPS."

Here are a few of the essential rules which should govern them:

1. Under any and all circumstances politeness MUST govern every association with the patrons, all complaints being referred to the superintendent or manager.
2. There must be NO smoking, gum-chewing, playing, etc., about the theatre; nor any conversation between ushers while a per-

formance is on; nor should ushers seat themselves during performance in rear rows next to patrons.

3. Hair must be brushed and orderly; hands and nails must be clean; shoes must be polished; uniforms well pressed and neatly kept; and an erect bearing maintained at all times.
4. EVERY transaction with a patron MUST be accompanied by a pleasant smile and concluded with a "Thank you."
5. All uniforms MUST be carefully hung on hangers in lockers or ushers' room after each performance, and this room must be at all times kept clean and tidy.
6. If a six-day town, ushers should never enter the theatre or hang around the front of same on Sundays.

These employees should be given clearly to understand, in common with every other employee of the house, that impudence, impertinence or discourtesy to a patron WILL NOT be condoned, regardless of the circumstances. It is not intended that employees shall be servile or lacking in spirit and pride, but that they shall realize that in dealing with the general public—whether it be on a railroad train, in a hotel, telephone office or other public institu-

tion—there is but one policy which has proved unfailingly profitable, and that is the one which makes UNIFORM and INVARIABLE COURTESY to EVERY PATRON, under ANY AND ALL CIRCUMSTANCES, the dominant characteristic of the business.

Ushers should be provided with small electric flashlights for use in seating patrons after the curtain has risen and the auditorium is darkened. These, held low, guide the patron, sometimes preventing his falling, and a consequent lawsuit.

Ushers should never run or slide down aisles or congregate in two's and three's to gossip. They should be carefully trained to read their coupons accurately, and to KNOW, when they start out with a patron, just where they are going, not ushering him back and forth or up and down an aisle. Ushers should never endeavor to seat two parties of patrons at the same time.

If ushers handle the programs, their instructions should be to see that every patron receives one, as this is just as important a part of "service" as seating them properly. Soiled or used programs should never be distributed, or a seat noisily slammed down.

If water is passed by the ushers during per-

formances, as is not infrequently the case, a time should be chosen for this that will not interfere with the act then on. In other words, this should never be done during a quiet act. And when it is done, every precaution should be taken to do it quietly, unobtrusively, and with a minimum of disturbance to patrons and acts.

Ushers should be impressed with the necessity of conducting themselves in the dressing-room, theatre, and in their dealings with the public as they would in a refined home, and there should never be a general exodus of ushers just before the show is over. They should take their appointed stations, stand erect and "in service" until the last patron is out, after which they should each cover their respective section of the theatre, turn up each seat, pick up any lost articles and turn them in to the box-office or superintendent; and not until this is done, are they "off duty." Turning back the seats will often discover loose or broken ones, and will also facilitate work for the cleaners.

It goes without saying that an usher should never leave his post of duty to go out of the theatre or back stage during a performance except upon specific instructions from the superintendent or manager.

The Night Watchman

A sober, reliable, industrious middle-aged man should be employed, to report for duty at about seven in the evening and be relieved at about 7:30 a. m. by the porter or cleaners.

He should be provided with the standard watchman's clock, stations therefor being located close to box-office, at front of theatre, both sides of auditorium, balcony, gallery, on stage, under stage, at back door of theatre and such other points as should be regularly visited during the night.

The night watchman, while his first duty is to see to the general safety of the theatre, can be "doubled" as a cleaner between about 3 a. m. and his relief time, and used to clean the balcony or gallery, or some other section of the theatre. He can do this without interference with his efficiency as a watchman, and thus justify his salary, which is, in many theatres, considered rather an unnecessary one.

A theatre is, however, subject to so many risks that it has been the writer's experience that the expense incident to keeping a reliable night watchman on duty is more than justified, especially if he is given some work to do about the house at night that will not interfere with

his duties as guardian of the property entrusted to his care.

The Porters and Cleaners

The porter is the general "handy man" around the theatre; as a rule his hours are long and his service includes the making of many little repairs about the house. It follows that he should know how to repair a leaky faucet, a bad-order toilet, a noisy radiator or a broken chair; he should also be able to use a paint brush properly. A good porter, honest, diligent and efficient, is a valuable employee, and, if he is capable, his value will far exceed in dollars and cents the amount of his salary.

Whether one or more porters are employed, written instructions should be issued governing their general duties, and the manager and superintendent should both check closely behind the work done, observing that it is thorough, that economy is practiced in the use of cleaning materials, etc.

Porters should wear uniforms and caps, but of a different type and color from those of the balance of the staff. They should report promptly for work at the hour designated in instructions. If the head porter doubles as

footman, it should be his duty to see that the lights are turned out and the front of house securely closed after each performance.

Lobby, sidewalk and gutters should be kept clean, but this work should never be done while audiences are passing in or out of theatre, except as to picking up used ticket envelopes strewn about the floor, etc. A mop and pail of clean water, broom and dustpan should be kept in some accessible (concealed) place, available for emergency use in the lobby.

It is suggested that the porter and the cleaners (if men) should report for duty not later than eight o'clock each morning and should be given lunch hour at a time that will permit of their being back and in uniform at least thirty minutes before show time.

The porter should be trained carefully to be polite and courteous to all persons, and as the average porter is not a person of great mental capacity, his work should be carefully supervised EVERY DAY by the manager or superintendent. Unpolished brass, unclean floors, a disorderly lobby, dirty carpets, dusty chairs, dull mirrors and glass, and filthy sidewalk and gutter not only indicate an inefficient porter, but also mighty poor supervision of his work.

Much emphasis is laid on the necessity for

cleanliness in all parts of the house at all times. There are reasons for this other than merely the matter of making the theatre attractive, and not the least important of these is that accumulations of rubbish in the corner of a closet, behind a door in a dark hall, under and back of radiators and in seldom visited portions of a theatre, have been directly responsible for more than one disastrous fire. A fire in a theatre is several degrees worse in its damaging effect than one in almost any other institution. It not only causes the physical damage and loss, but it also begets distrust in the mind of the public as to the safety of the house, with a consequent loss of the patronage of timid persons.

If the management, superintendent and cleaning crew are inclined toward shiftless indifference to the importance of ABSOLUTE CLEANLINESS in all departments and at all times, they are likely to be equally careless in other respects.

Whatever number of persons it may be necessary to employ in order to keep the theatre, in all its parts, scrupulously clean, should be engaged. The best class of persons for this work, in the writer's experience and observation, is women from twenty-five to thirty-five years of age, of sufficiently sturdy physical strength to do the work well.

In the application of oil or polish to woodwork or seats, great care should be taken by the cleaners to "wipe dry and polish" so that the management will not be faced with claims for damage to ladies' clothes.

A vacuum cleaner is a necessity and can be used to great advantage in cleaning seats, behind radiators, in corners, etc.

Each cleaner should be responsible for the condition of his or her particular brooms, mops, pails, etc., and should be required, after using same, to store them neatly in the place provided for that purpose.

The Ladies' Maid

Though many theatres do not maintain this employee, even when a ladies' retiring-room is provided, the position is not an unimportant one, and in theatres of the better class it can be made a very desirable adjunct to the other service of the house.

If a maid is employed, she should be chosen with the same careful attention to her qualifications for the work to be done as is given to the selection of other employees.

She should preferably be white, about thirty-five years of age, of good reputation, neat and

clean in her appearance and habits, adept and deft at rendering the little services which ladies are likely to require. Her character should be above reproach, and it should be her duty to see that the ladies' retiring-room is kept neat and clean, and the equipment maintained at standard. After the show she should lock up the small articles, such as brushes, combs, etc., and at least ten minutes before the house opens for each show, she should have the room ready for inspection by the superintendent or manager.

It should be distinctly understood that she is to render cheerful, willing service to all comers alike—as readily to the modestly as to the elaborately dressed patron. She should not be permitted to accept gratuities and should remain courteous and polite under any and all circumstances.

Her uniform should consist of black skirt and waist, with white apron and cap. She should remain on duty until every patron has departed from the theatre after every performance.

The Footman

In these days of automobiles and a general tendency toward "dressing up" the front of the

house, many of the leading theatres in larger cities have added a footman to the staff. Usually this employee doubles in some other capacity during the hours when he is not on duty as footman.

If there is to be a footman at the theatre, he should be of commanding stature, exceptionally polite, uniformed, and during winter months warmly enough clad as to make it unnecessary for him to loiter in the lobby in an effort to keep warm.

He should meet patrons arriving in autos, etc., at the curb, open the doors of cars, assist crippled or infirm persons across the sidewalk, etc. If it is a custom to park cars against the curb adjoining the theatre, or across the street, the footman should, so far as may be practicable, keep watch over them while the owners are in the theatre.

After the first show, he should be familiar with the exact time of the last curtain, in order to inform patrons when asked. At the close of the performance he should again be at the curb, assisting in every way to expedite the calling of cars, opening doors, etc. He should not hold "curbstone conferences" with his friends, but should be at attention during his hours on duty.

A shovel and broom should be kept in a handy but concealed place, for his use during the show in maintaining an orderly appearance about the sidewalk, curb and gutters.

The Picture Machine and Spotlight Operator

This is an employee who, under usual conditions, works in a seldom-visited and isolated portion of the theatre. Hence it is essential that he be of the type that can be trusted, that will be loyal, bearing constantly in mind how much depends upon intelligent and efficient service in his department.

First and foremost, he handles an unusually inflammable material—celluloid film. Once ignited it is extremely difficult to extinguish. It follows that all electrical equipment should be so installed as to eliminate the likelihood of arcing, short-circuiting, falling sparks, etc. It is essential that the booth be kept scrupulously clean; that all film not actually in the machine be stored in proper metal containers; that the safety appliances of the machine be not tampered with, "improved," or altered in any way. Manufacturers spend thousands of dollars in perfecting safety devices and the National

Board of Fire Underwriters subjects them to exhaustive laboratory tests to determine their efficiency; for an operator to decide that he can, with a rubber band and a piece of string, improve upon this work, is ridiculous. Therefore, tampering in any way with these devices should be punished by dismissal.

Automatic door-opening and closing devices, protected by fusible plugs, and in accordance with codes and ordinances, should likewise not be indiscriminately subjected to the operator's inventive experiments.

However, this does not imply that the operator may not have good ideas. If an improvement is suggested by him, it should receive consideration from the manager, and possibly a test arranged for it, in the presence of the local fire marshal and insurance experts. The manager will have thereby proved his alertness, and will have legitimately encouraged the operator not only in whatever mechanical inventiveness he may possess, but also in his feeling of loyalty toward the theatre and its management.

The operator should have a pail of clean, dry sand at the side of each machine for use as a fire-extinguisher; nothing has proved so effective in film fires. In addition to this, ample

approved chemical fire-extinguishing apparatus should be provided. The buckets of sand are not intended to serve also as cuspidors. The booth must be kept free from any accumulation of rubbish, paper and magazines, etc.

Operators are prone to "start her going" on a thousand-foot reel, and then sit down to read or indulge in a deep brown study as far away from the heat of the lamp as they can get. This is very poor practice. A picture "out of frame" is a miserable thing for the audience to look at, and "out of focus" is worse. It does not matter that the operator may be weary of looking at the same picture; so long as he is running it, he should be alert at the side of the machine, looking through the porthole at the picture. No excuse should be accepted for any other position, unless it is necessary for him to rewind one film while running another; in this event he should have his rewinding apparatus so located that he can look through the porthole at the picture every few seconds.

Wastage of current here, through "warming up" carbons earlier than is necessary, should be guarded against, likewise wastage of carbons—a considerable item on the season. Modern appliances have done away with the necessity for discarding three or four inches of car-

bon butt, as almost the entire stick can now be effectively consumed.

If a picture is worth running, it is worth running right. It should never be "speeded up" until the figures jump about crazily, nor yet slowed down to the same effect. These things are perfectly apparent, and are mentioned only that the writer may not be accused of incompleteness as to essential details.

Films should be PROMPTLY shipped in accordance with the instructions of the furnishing exchange, and the operator should have a clear receipt covering every shipment. He should be held PERSONALLY responsible for this.

Acts requiring spotlights should be given a thorough light rehearsal, and the light plot should be clearly understood by the operator, who should in every case be furnished with a written or typed plot. There is no excuse for the operator's leaving his booth or spotlight machine when his services are not, for the moment, in requisition; emphasis is placed on this for the reason that his lamps are frequently on an entirely different circuit from those of the rest of the house, and in case of an emergency he can furnish enough light to prevent a panic in the auditorium. An operator should understand that by smoking in the booth or while

on duty, he automatically forfeits his position.

Cleaning, oiling and maintaining the efficiency of the costly machines should be a matter of pride with him—otherwise it will certainly be one of considerable expense to the management. The operator is in a position of peculiar trust, in view of the dangerously inflammable material which he handles. He should be made to feel this responsibility keenly and no carelessness on his part should be for a moment tolerated.

STAGE EMPLOYEES

The Stage Crew

This is the department which actually handles the production and presentation of every performance. Unless things run smoothly and on time here, the show suffers. Stage-hands should not be expected to be of exceptional capabilities; if they were they would probably not be stage-hands. Therefore, upon the direction, training and advice they receive from the stage-manager, and through him from the manager, will largely depend the thoroughness and degree of intelligence with which their work is done.

It is not infrequently the habit of some mem-

bers of the crew to slip out to a nearby saloon; or, when a twenty-minute sketch goes on and everything is set for it, to congregate with other employees and outsiders in the alley, or at the stage entrance. This should NEVER be permitted. A fire, an accident, or something gone wrong on the stage, and time lost getting them in and to work may spell disaster, even ruin.

A clean shave and a gentlemanly appearance are no less desirable on the stage than out front. There are women artists on the bill, entitled to the same consideration as the women patrons—and it is due them that the crew look to these matters. It is also due the crew itself, for the practice of requiring this will increase their self-respect and their general pride in and loyalty to their craft.

Smoking on stage while on duty and reporting tardy or intoxicated are legitimate reasons for dismissal. In general practice the author deems it fairest and best to warn the employee the first time he transgresses this rule, and discharge him for the second infraction thereof.

The entire crew should be required to work in perfect harmony, under the general supervision of the stage-manager, who should so conduct himself as to command and hold their respect.

Graft in any department should be sternly

discouraged, and it is advisable that both manager and stage-manager exercise every precaution to prevent its practice as destructive in part of the efficiency of the crew. Gambling, crap-shooting, etc., should not be permitted on or about the stage at any time.

The stage crew should be drilled in the use of the fire-extinguishing apparatus; each member should be assigned to a specific duty and station in case of fire, and to make sure that these are clearly understood, periodical drills should be held.

The Stage-Manager

This is the employee in direct and responsible charge of the stage, its crew and workings; is oft times the "go-between" for the artist and manager in settling little difficulties or disputes, and frequently the smooth and harmonious running of the bill will depend upon his tact and diplomacy in handling these minor arguments. He must not be arrogant or overbearing, or inclined to loud or boisterous ways. If there is the slightest doubt as to the course to pursue in event of disagreement with an act, he should defer making a decision until he is able to communicate with the manager, and then impart the

result of his conference or instructions in a courteous but firm manner. Let the impression be given that the effort is to arrive at fair and equitable conclusions, having in mind what will be best for the entire bill and the theatre, rather than the favoring of some special or headline act.

He should see that the stage and its surroundings are kept clean, not indifferently so, but thoroughly. It behooves him to be alive to fire risks in EVERY POSSIBLE connection and to be alert in protecting the interests of the theatre by eliminating customs or conditions which might cause personal injuries. As an illustration: Recently, in a vaudeville theatre, the flyman, climbing the ladder to the gallery, fell from a considerable height to the stage and was seriously injured. He fell because a handhold on the ladder pulled off. The ladder had been used every day for several seasons. It was generally known about the stage that it was pretty well worn, but the stage-manager had not taken enough interest in the matter to inspect it and MAKE SURE it was safe. Many instances of a similar nature could be cited; of worn ropes giving way and dropping weights, border lights, etc., cleaners and others falling from worn and defective stepladders, faulty

and poorly-lighted stairways causing tumbles, etc. Suffice it to say that such incidents are often very expensive, and that most of them can be prevented by wide-awake, alert inspection, with proper action, BEFORE AN ACCIDENT OCCURS.

It should be borne in mind that though employer's and public liability insurance policies apparently protect against loss in connection with personal injuries sustained in and about the theatre, the policy probably provides, and the courts are likely to hold, that it is the management's duty to exercise due diligence in maintaining premises and equipment in a reasonably safe condition.

There can be no slacking of the stage-manager's diligence—it must be constant to be properly effective and to maintain continuously high efficiency in all departments of the stage work. He should be watchful that lighting and electrical effects are properly handled; that electricity is not wastefully used, lamps or properties carelessly broken, etc. He should be sternly insistent that all his subordinates perform their duties properly and loyally, and not hesitate to discipline them when they fail to do so; but he should never shout his orders so loudly that they can be heard by patrons in the auditorium.

Let it be clearly understood that since he has under his supervision and direction the heads of the various stage departments and looks to them for efficient service therein, it is to him that the manager will look for an explanation of shortcomings or any stage work improperly done and that an effort seeking to shift the blame to a sub-department head will not, under any circumstances, be satisfactory. If it is apparent to the stage-manager that he has an incompetent man in any department, it behooves him, with the consent of the manager, to replace that man with a competent one.

As a general proposition, the manager should transmit important instructions, notices of change in programs, and general orders, *in writing* to the stage-manager, retaining a carbon copy thereof. There will be many times when this will avoid a subsequent disagreement as to just what was said or was to be done.

The stage-manager should bear in mind that the headliner cannot give the whole show—that the opening act is entitled to and should receive the same courteous and complete attention to his needs as that given any other on the bill. It should be his custom to see that, so far as practicable, the reasonable requests of all artists for props, settings, etc., are complied with. He

should remember that the artist has probably been doing the same act for some time, has very likely made a close study of the effect upon it of the use of certain types of settings, props, lighting, etc., and presumably knows better than anyone else just what is required.

It is almost needless to say that the stage-manager should be on duty early and late—that is, from the time he "goes in" until the show is over. He should be the last to leave the stage. Let him see that the stage is cleared, props taken care of, and stage lights reduced to pilot lights at switchboard and night light before leaving the theatre.

Careful thought should be given to the selection and training of the man who is to occupy the important position of stage-manager.

The Electrician

An indifferent mechanic in this department, one of the "let it go at that" type, will not do. Electricity, handled properly, is almost infallible; handled otherwise, it is subject to freakish, unexpected and disconcerting "stunts." It starts fires, blows out fuses, burns up lamps, shocks people and causes much damage if it is not controlled by one who knows how to han-

dle it. It is alert and alive, quick as lightning —and it takes just that type of individual to control it.

The electrician, by careful attention to preventing wastage of current, breakage of lamps; by guarding against "grounds," short-circuits; by proper fusing and the making of secure, dependable connections, can save more than his salary every week. A ground or a short-circuit may blow out main or other fuses, put the house and stage in darkness, and ruin an act or a whole show.

It behooves the electrician to look carefully and constantly to his stock on hand and the condition of cables, connectors, sockets, plugs, plugging boxes, spot, bunch, flood, strip and other lights, fuses, switches, dimmers and all other electrical apparatus, including borders and footlights. Sufficient fuses of all sizes used in the theatre for emergencies should be kept on hand always; not stored in some inaccessible place, but instantly available. Color-frames, colorine, gelatines, cables and such equipment should be maintained in strictly first-class workable condition, with stocks on hand sufficient to care for emergencies.

The electrician should be provided with a suitable room with adequate shelf space, for the

storing of his materials under lock and key. Issues to or purchases by him of such material should be carefully recorded and checked by the management. When he wishes a carton of globes purchased, he should have a carton of burnt-out or broken ones to turn in for it, and this rule should apply with fuses and other equipment.

Bunch, strip, spot and such lights, when not in use, should be stored in an accessible place, but not where they will be knocked over and broken by shifting scenery, etc.

The electrician should know how to read meters and calculate the amount in dollars and cents of the current used. He should make his readings at the same time as the representative of the electrical company, and should turn in to the manager a written slip showing the figures and amount. He should be required to explain any unusual fluctuation in the amount of current used.

The switchboard should be equipped with a chemical fire-extinguisher of the type approved for use in case of electrical fires, and a substantial electric flashlight.

There is no more important station back stage than at the switchboard, and the electrician, during hours of performance, should be there

constantly. He SHOULD NOT, ever, when an act has gone on to "set" for twenty minutes or so, hie himself to the stage door for a "gab-fest," or isolate himself in the store-room, or otherwise so conceal himself that in an emergency it would take a Sherlock Holmes to discover his whereabouts; he should be right at the switchboard, prepared and equipped to handle any situation that may arise with reference to the electrical equipment. Just bear in mind that a blown fuse, a dark house, and a slight delay in getting conditions remedied may result in a panic out front.

At rehearsals he should be SURE he understands cues correctly, and to eliminate subsequent argument, should either require the artist to give them to him in writing, or make a written record of them himself and require the artist to "O. K." it. He should understand that he is not merely a mechanic, but that he is part and parcel of the show itself; apart from a real disaster, no one back stage can do more harm to an act than can a negligent, careless individual in charge of the destinies of the switchboard.

THE PROPERTY-MAN

"Resourcefulness" should be the middle name of the individual who is competent to occupy the

position of property-man in a theatre. There are other important qualifications, but this one is essential. He may be called upon to supply anything from an Egyptian mummy to a three week-old child, upon a moment's notice. He must be a bit of a carpenter, something of an artist, a great deal of a diplomat, and he must be "on the job" from the rising of the sun to considerably after the setting thereof—in other words, this is not the place for a lazy or a shiftless man.

A property-man should have the ability to meet people pleasantly and to make a favorable impression. He should cultivate cordial relations with transfer companies, with the various merchants of the city, and with other persons from whom he is likely to need favors in the way of borrowed properties. He will be faced with the necessity of requesting loans from homes, pawn-shops, museums and other public institutions, stores and individuals. He should be able to convey the impression of responsibility—and should live up to it. To a peculiar degree, he has the reputation of the theatre in his keeping; it is absolutely essential that he call for properties loaned or rented at the time agreed upon, that he care for such articles most assiduously while they are being used and that

he return them promptly and in the same condition as when borrowed.

Whatever agreement has been made for remuneration to the lender, whether in the form of passes, money or the patronage of the theatre, display in the program or other manner, should be strictly and conscientiously adhered to. If, regardless of the cause, borrowed properties are damaged during their transportation to or from, or use in the theatre, the property-man should not attempt to slip them back to the owner without advising him of the damage. It is best to make a clean breast of it with appropriate apologies and a sincere offer to repair the damage or pay for the article—for if the merchants and others know this is the theatre's practice, they will more willingly loan the property-man the articles he needs.

The property-man should be allowed a reasonable number of passes with which to "square" his borrowings; but he should be required to account carefully for them and be checked by the management upon their use.

It requires dexterous and intelligent handling of props "on stage" to avoid costly breakage and damage. A few suggestions tending to the prevention of this are: Remove pictures from scenery, bric-à-brac from mantels and ta-

bles, floor-lamps, desk-lamps, etc., "into clear" BEFORE the setting is struck. Then as the set is struck and openings made, remove tables, chairs, lounges, pianos, and the heavier stuff; and in placing or storing props and furniture against walls or packs, take care to avoid putting them in the way of stuff to be quickly handled into the next set. Fragile articles, such as vases, clocks, bric-à-brac, etc., should be immediately stored in the property-room, in their proper places, and not left about the stage, on tables, etc., to be knocked over and broken. As soon as the set is finished, furniture and like props left on the stage against walls, etc., should be covered with heavy unbleached muslin sheets or coverings, of which four or five, ranging in size from 12 feet by 12 feet to 12 feet by 20 feet, should be furnished the property department. Number each of these prop covers consecutively in large black figures, to prevent their being torn up for cleaning rags and to aid in checking this department when inventories are made. Proper use of these coverings will save paying for refinishing many a scratched table, piano or chair.

The customary upright-piano used by vaudeville acts in "one" is generally a disgraceful-looking affair. Five minutes spent daily on this, with an oil-dampened rag, will keep it

bright and new-looking despite the rough handling it of necessity receives; there is no excuse for flaunting in the face of an audience the marred, scratched, dull-looking instrument that is so often rolled out on a dark change. This simple suggestion means not only increased life for the instrument, but also materially enhances exchange and selling value, or, if borrowed, minimizes complaint when the instrument is returned to the dealer. Most first-class theatres now-a-days are equipped with ball-bearing roller piano trucks in which their pianos are handled, and houses which do not possess such are urged to get one for each instrument handled on the stage. They can either be made by the carpenter, or secured through the piano dealer at moderate cost; equipped with extra large ball-bearing casters, they are moved with the greatest ease and control even when loaded with the heaviest instruments.

All stage-carpets and medallions should have 2-inch galvanized iron rings sewed half-way into and along one side of same, one foot apart, reinforced with 3-inch webbing, or attached with leather tabs so they will be very secure. A batten should be provided for each of the carpets or medallions, with 2-inch open screw hooks one foot apart. The rings at the side

of the carpet readily and quickly fasten over hooks in the batten and the carpet can be quickly flied. This avoids rolling or folding these, keeps them cleaner and adds years to their life.

Small rugs, portières, draperies, lace curtains, etc., should be hung over poles in a special part of the property-room or in a separate, dust-proof place, set aside as the rug and drapery room. In this same room, adequately wide, clean shelves should be available for storing sofa pillows, scarfs and small draperies.

The property-room holds much of the material necessary for making the stage picture attractive, and seldom receives the attention it deserves. It should be as nearly dust-proof as possible, absolutely dry, and kept perfectly clean and orderly.

Ground-cloths, stage-carpets and rugs should be swept daily, and when placed in any set should be run over with a Bissell "Hotel" size carpet-sweeper. Floor coverings will then look as they should when the curtain goes up, and a bi-weekly vacuum cleaning, if the house has a machine, will lengthen their life and keep them fresh-looking almost indefinitely.

If, through unusually rough or careless use, an artist damages or wrecks a piece of furniture or

a prop, he should be required to pay for repairing or replacing it, whichever is necessary. As soon as the damage is done, the property-man should make a report to the manager, stating the nature of the injury to the article in question and giving an estimate of the cost of repairing or replacing it. The artist should be notified immediately that this amount will be deducted from his salary, and if any argument results from this, it will take place while all the circumstances are fresh in the minds of those concerned. Promptness in attending to such occurrences will eliminate disputes and probable unpleasantness at the conclusion of the artist's engagement.

It is customary in many theatres for the property-man to attend to sending out and receiving the laundry for the artists. The writer has found no objection to this custom, which is quite a convenience to the artists, provided that the theatre be not involved in any manner in the case of loss or miscarriage of bundles. The small commission allowed the property-man by the laundry is considered a legitimate perquisite of the position. It goes without saying that it should not, and in the author's observation it does not, interfere with the proper performance of his regular duties.

An accurate inventory should be made of all properties at the beginning of each season, written up in triplicate, one copy retained by the property-man, one filed with the manager, and one with the accounting officer or department of the proprietor of the theatre. At the end of the season, or once annually if the theatre runs the year around, this should be carefully checked, and all shortages accounted for by manager's memo authorizing discarding, junking, sale or other disposal. Inasmuch as the property-man is held responsible for all of this material, it follows that he should be furnished with adequately secure premises in which to store it. If a property is hopelessly wrecked, or has outlived its usefulness, the matter should be called to the attention of the manager, who, upon personally verifying the condition, should issue a memo in triplicate authorizing the property-man to make a certain specified disposal of it, and one copy of this memo should be attached to each of the original inventories. When during the season a property is purchased, a similar memo thereof should be made and filed with each of the inventories. Thus a clear and checkable record is maintained with a minimum of effort, and the system will save the loss, in one way or another, of

many small and inexpensive and probably some costly properties each season.

The importance of the department presided over by the property-man is sometimes not adequately realized by the management; its value will vary according to the intelligence, loyalty and ambition of the individual employed, and according, also, to the amount of co-operation and appreciation which he receives from his employer.

The Flyman

In the average theatre, this employee is isolated, during the performance, from the rest of the crew. Aloft, unobserved, he must needs be a man who will not take advantage of the fact to indulge in improper practices. He should get his sleep at hours other than those devoted to work in the theatre; and just because he can "get away" with a smoke, shouldn't try it.

He should never permit stacks of tangled slack in unused lines to block up the passageway of his gallery; he should report promptly to the stage-manager or carpenter, lines that do not run freely, squeaky shifts, etc. He should scrutinize lines carefully and report for re-

placing any that are frayed or badly worn; he should observe cables leading to border lights and if they are torn loose from fastenings or damaged in any way, report immediately to the electrician or stage-manager.

His station during inactivity should be convenient to the speaking tube and where he can observe the signal light and hear the auxiliary buzzer signal, for a circumstance may arise requiring quick action on his part and much may depend upon it. No one can foretell the moment this signal may come, hence it is apparent that "eternal vigilance is the price of safety."

He should be provided with a chemical fire-extinguisher and two heavy sharp hand-axes, one located at each end of the gallery and hung on convenient hooks, for use in cutting ropes in case of fire. And at this point let it be said that these are fire-axes, equipment for use in a serious emergency; therefore, they MUST NOT be removed, temporarily or otherwise, except for their proper purpose. It is quite the usual thing for the carpenter or some other employee to "borrow" these axes and not return them. This must be guarded against.

The flyman should sweep out his gallery daily; the same rule as to neatness, elimination

of rubbish, and cleanliness which applies in all other portions of the theatre should govern here.

It is well to make sure that the flyman does not devote his time while acts are "on" to literary pursuits of the "Diamond Dick" or the "Nick Carter" variety.

He should be trained to look well to the security of his "tie off" and to take a pride in the efficiency and dependability of his work. It will be worth while for the manager to make it a practice to climb up to this seldom-visited place not less often than once a week to look it over, with words of appreciation for real service, correction if needed, or disapproval of undesirable conditions. If it is not practicable for the manager to do this personally, he should be sure that his stage-manager does, and reports to him once weekly the conditions obtaining in this important department.

THE STAGE

The stage is the actor's workshop and playground as well, where he builds his air castles of the present and his plans of the future. It is upon the "boards" that the artist displays his wares, meets with rebuff or receives the greatest

of all rewards that can come to him, the applause of pleased audiences.

In view of these facts, and for cold-blooded business reasons as well, it pays to make the stage a clean, well-lighted and cheerful workshop. Walls should be painted white all around to at least the height of the fly-gallery floor, which can be quickly and cheaply done with a spraying machine, using a liquid white compound which will not rub off; a strip of flat white should be applied, two coats 2 feet wide, on the floor all around stage, painting across this border at every door or opening onto stage a strip of black the same width as the door or opening. This aids in preventing careless persons from expectorating behind scenery, along the base of walls or in corners.

The entire floor of stage, not only the center, but behind switchboards, radiators, and clear to the walls, should be thoroughly swept each morning, and as often during the day as is necessary. The footlight trough, a place where dust and dirt are particularly prone to accumulate, should be cleaned out daily with the house vacuum cleaner, or a strong hand-blower, after which should come a thorough dusting and all lamps wiped clean and bright; this will give better results in stage lighting, the min-

imum of trouble with short-circuits in footlights, and a possible reduction in insurance rates of a cent or two per hundred.

The stage floor and corridors should be thoroughly scrubbed or mopped with warm water and soap, twice weekly, except in the space between footlight trough and curtain line in one. The apron should be laid in clear, well-seasoned maple or other hardwood; and it should be kept in condition by a daily rub with a rag permeated with a mixture made of three parts turpentine and one part boiled linseed oil. The footlight trough and hardwood apron should be covered with a tarpaulin at all times except when show is on. This will keep the apron smooth and polished, and prevent breakage of footlight globes during rehearsals, etc.

The general cleanliness of the stage is an important matter; if rubbish is allowed to accumulate in corners and behind radiators, etc., in time it may cause the destruction of the theatre by fire, and there is no middle ground between cleanliness and uncleanliness. A slovenly-kept stage foreshadows shiftless work in other departments and lack of attention to details.

The reader may think that undue stress has been laid upon some details—for instance, the

advice to use warm water in scrubbing. Nevertheless, warm water dries out quicker than cold, is not so likely to warp or injure the boards, adds wonderfully to the cleansing power of the soap, and is just as easy to obtain as cold water, if one really wishes to do the best work. The question may occur: Why be so particular about the hardwood apron? Because, first: a hardwood apron is expensive; it will last a season or a theatrical lifetime, according to the care it receives. Second: a real dancing floor will materially improve the work of a dancing act, and every vaudeville house will have many of these. Third: nothing worth doing at all deserves to be half-done. To go into the detail of explaining just why it is advised that things be done thus and so would involve unnecessary writing and reading; suffice it to say at this point that there have been and will be no suggestions of a theoretical nature made; none that is unpractical, and none but those which have actually proved their economic and artistic value in actual practice, in both large and small theatres.

The stage (at any time during the hours of the performance, under any circumstances) should never be a gathering place for "town folks," "city friends of the artists," "purveyors

of wares," "mashers," or for any but those whose duties require them to be there. In the first place, visitors are in the way and impede the work of the crew; in the second place, their presence tends to lower the dignity, destroy the illusion and demean the prestige of the stage; for remember, it is the "masher" and other behind-the-scenes visitors who have carried to the world the garbled tales that have reflected discredit upon the people of the theatre; and in the third place, a sand-bag, counter-weight, or piece of scenery dropped on a visitor who is on the stage with the manager's knowledge and consent is likely to net a troublesome and expensive lawsuit.

Instructions to the stage-manager, and through him to EVERY EMPLOYEE of the stage, should be positive on this point, even to the extent of forbidding the flyman to have a helper who works for nothing "to see the show"—which is a common practice in some houses. Of course, if a back-doorman is employed, these instructions should be his guiding rule.

Artists should be forbidden to stand in the wings or pull back the drop in "one" to see the show; they should stay off stage until it is time to go on for their act, and when finished should go to their dressing-rooms. There are the same

reasons for this rule as for forbidding visitors on the stage, and it is one that should be enforced. A sign on the back of the tormentors is considered advisable in many theatres, warning acts of this rule.

The manager personally should visit the stage at least once during every performance. If he does this, and the crew knows it to be his habit, things will be done that otherwise are likely not to be.

Stage Equipment

Hardware. Emphasis is laid upon the necessity for thorough equipment for the stage, both as to hardware and properties, for if this is not complete the proper presentation of shows will often be seriously handicapped. Make-shifts should not be resorted to except in extreme cases; in these days there is a proper tool, appliance or property available for almost every practical requirement, and such should be provided.

The list submitted of essential scenic, property and hardware equipment is naturally subject to such variation as local conditions warrant, but as made up is intended to fit the needs of a first-class vaudeville theatre, after the frame

stuff is all complete and delivered from the studio.

HARDWARE

QUANTITY	ARTICLE
8 dozen	Stage screws.
1 dozen	Pairs hinges, hook pins, back-flap, 1½″ x 3½″.
4 sets	Door knobs and plates, 2 each, different designs.
1 dozen	Pairs curtain-pole sockets, heavy brass.
1 dozen	Hangers, picture frame.
10 pounds	Nails, clout, 1½″.
10 dozen	Carpet pins
1 dozen	Lashing cleats.
2 dozen	Stage braces, extension from 2′ to 8′, closed.
5 dozen	Profile corner blocks.
7 dozen	Profile keystones.
4	Profile boards, old-time scrimmed.
Necessary	Head blocks, sheaves, curtain lead blocks, tension pulleys, belaying pins, trims, clamps, sand-bags, etc. The requisition for this equipment should be made for the hanging stuff. Include in this order sufficient ⅜″ wire messenger cable for border lights and ⅝″ hemp or sisal rope for other lines.

PROPERTIES

QUANTITY	ARTICLE
1	White mantel for light interiors.
1	Dark mantel for dark interiors.
1	Mantel painted into interior set. These mantels should be made by the house carpenter of heavier design than the conventional residence mantel; should sit on low platforms and be mounted on heavy ball-bearing casters.
	Book cases (false fronts), finished to match dark set; one 5′ wide by 6′ high, and one 5′9″ wide by 4′6″ high.
	Chairs, kitchen.
	Table, kitchen, to be made by stage carpenter, strongly braced and bolted, in the following sizes: 3′6″, 3′, 2′6″. These will be used by acrobatic and other acts, and should be of very durable construction.
	Wood pedestals, and 1 pair tabourets, each pair to be of finish and design harmonizing with parlor or interior sets.

QUANTITY	ARTICLE
1 set	Parlor furniture, upholstered in a subdued color with narrow striped velour or cotton velvet. This set should be in one particular design, and consist of divan or settee, two large arm chairs, two small chairs, and one large and one small stand or table.
1 set	Parlor furniture, same number of pieces, but of different design, upholstered or covered with dark figured imported tapestry.
1 set	Wicker furniture, finished in light brown or ivory, covered with neutral shade of cretonne. This set should include a writing table or desk, and standing floor lamp.
1 set	Wicker or rustic, strongly made, finished in light or pea green, consisting of round table with umbrella canopy, one small stand, bench seat and three or four chairs.
8 or 4 sets	Portières, sufficient pairs of each color and design to hang at all openings in each interior set except at small doors. These should hang on 1½" hardwood poles and be hung with large, easy-riding brass rings. Poles and rings should be hidden from view by valance of same material as portières, and of a depth to equalize or balance height of openings. The following colors are suggested for these sets of portières: old-gold, light blue, old-rose, mahogany or narrow-striped mulberry, being sure that shade of hangings harmonizes with color scheme of the scenery, and shades of carpets and furniture coverings.
1	Rug, 9'x12' or 12'x15' (depending upon size of stage), of Chinese or Persian design, with dark shaded background.
6	Rugs, small, in three different sizes, Persian designs and of color that will harmonize with large rug and other stage carpets.
	Carpet, gray or old-gold, large enough to cover at least 21 feet back of first entrance of "one" and 4 feet wider than proscenium opening. Avoid bright red and light green; stick to the quiet, rich, but light tones.
1	Strip or "runner" of carpet one yard wide and long enough to cover entire width of stage to within two feet of proscenium arch on each side. This for the use of dressing, singing and such acts in "one," and should be of same shade as the velvet or velour drop if the house is equipped with one. Blue, royal purple or mulberry make very desir-

QUANTITY	ARTICLE
	able colors for this use. Bright greens and reds should be avoided. This strip should be placed on stage when to be used, by the property-man or assistant, in uniform, during dark change. Should be kept rolled, not folded, as in the former shape it can be more quickly placed on stage and unrolled.
1	Baize or stage-carpet, brown one side, green other side, preferably of "James Clancy" make; same width as stage carpets and deep enough to cover stage from "one" to back wall. Should have rings, one foot apart, sewed securely half way in along up-stage edge of baize, reinforced with webbing. This allows the baize to be quickly flied by attaching to screw hooks in batten, keeping baize off stage and cleaner, when not in use.
1	Ground cloth of waterproof 12-ounce canvas, same width as stage-carpets and of sufficient depth, with grommets around all four sides.
6	Sofa pillows, different sizes and designs, in neutral shades.
1	Lot of assorted tapestry, amure and silk throws for draping in interior sets.
4	Assorted stand covers of same materials and shades.
1	Lot artificial flowers, best makes, in subdued colors.
1	Lot assorted vases in rich and unique designs.
1	Lot of statuary, bric-à-brac of distinct design and coloring, and good grade of ware.
1	Set each, plain linen and cretonne furniture covers, to fit and cover each piece of all interior sets.
1	Lot heavy unbleached muslin sheets, 12′x12′ and 12′x20′, to cover all furniture, mantels and props while on stage and not in actual use.
1	Lot grass mats, about 36″, assorted sizes.
2	Pianos, one grand and one upright, in pitch with orchestra, and to be moved about on ball-bearing trucks, and when not in use to be covered with rubber, canton-flannel lined covers.

A first-class vaudeville theatre should own this list of properties, furniture, carpets and drapery, when opening. There will be many props called for from week to week which are

not on this list, and will have to be borrowed. While it is better to be a good "borrower" than an extravagant buyer, it will be found much easier and cheaper in the long run to fill the usual weekly wants with the equipment listed, than to try to "get by" with less.

Scenery

The scenic equipment for a first-class vaudeville house is given in the following tabulated list, measurements based upon a stage 80 feet wide, 40 feet deep with opening 30 feet high and 36 feet wide.

1	Asbestos Curtain.	
1	Act Curtain.	
1	Grand Drapery Border	16'x42'
1	Working Drapery Border	6'x82'
2	Tormentors	8'x18'
2	Tormentor Flippers	4'x18'
1	LIGHT MODERN INTERIOR, consisting of	
	1 Center Door-piece, opening 6'x9'	12'x16'
	2 Side Arches, openings 5'x8'	8'x16'
	2 Door Wings, doors 3'x7'	6'x16'
	4 Plain Wings	6'x16'
	1 Window Wing (French)	6'x16'
	1 Fireplace Wing	6'x16'
	2 Jogs	8'x16'
	2 Jogs	2'x16'
1	LIGHT ITALIAN INTERIOR, consisting of	
	1 Center Door-piece	12'x16'
	2 Side Arches, openings 5'x8'	8'x16'
	2 Door Wings, doors 3'x7'	6'x16'
	4 Plain Wings	6'x16'
	1 Window Wing (French)	6'x16'
	1 Fireplace Wing	6'x16'
	2 Jogs	8'x16'
	2 Jogs	2'x16'

1 LIBRARY INTERIOR, consisting of
- 1 Center Door-piece ..... 12'x16'
- 2 Side Arches ..... 8'x16'
- 2 Door Wings ..... 6'x16'
- 4 Plain Wings ..... 6'x16'
- 1 Window Wing (French) ..... 6'x16'
- 1 Fireplace Wing ..... 6'x16'
- 2 Jogs ..... 3'x16'
- 2 Jogs ..... 2'x16'

1 OAK OFFICE INTERIOR, consisting of
- 1 Center Door-piece ..... 12'x16'
- 2 Door Wings ..... 6'x16'
- 4 Plain Wings ..... 6'x16'
- 1 Window Wing (French) ..... 6'x16'
- 1 Fireplace Wing ..... 6'x16'
- 2 Jogs ..... 3'x16'
- 2 Jogs ..... 2'x16'

1 PLAIN CHAMBER and KITCHEN SET COMBINED, consisting of
- 3 Door Wings ..... 6'x16'
- 4 Plain Wings ..... 6'x16'
- 1 Window Wing ..... 6'x16'
- 1 Fireplace Wing ..... 6'x16'
- 2 Jogs ..... 3'x16'
- 2 Jogs ..... 2'x16'

1 PALACE SET, consisting of
- 3 Palace Leg Drops, Palace Backing and Balustrades.
- 1 Velvet Drop.
- 1 Street Drop.
- 1 Olio Drop (Interior) ..... 24'x32'
- 1 Garden Drop ..... 24'x32'
- 1 Wood Drop ..... 24'x32'
- 1 Landscape Drop ..... 24'x32'
- 1 Picture Sheet ..... 24'x32'
- 3 Combination Wood and Garden Wings..... 6'x16'
  With Flippers attached ..... 4'x16'
- 4 Foliage Borders .....18', 15', 12', 9'x40'
- 3 Light Fancy Borders ..... 8'x36'
- 3 Dark Fancy Borders ..... 8'x36'
- 3 Plain Borders ..... 8'x36'
- 1 Hanging Hall Backing ..... 32'x16'
- 4 Wood Backings ..... 12'x12'
- 4 Interior Backings (light) ..... 12'x12'
- 4 Interior Backings (dark) ..... 12'x12'
- 2 Fireplace Backings of different designs.

1 SET HOUSE and RETURN.

1 SET COTTAGE and RETURN.

Asbestos curtain to be of proper weight and thickness as prescribed by fire laws or building codes and in any event weighing not less than 2 pounds to the square foot.

The *drop curtain* should be painted on best quality linen canvas; or a velour curtain may be used. All wings, doors and set pieces that are mounted on framework to be painted on heavy cotton. Drop scenes and borders to be painted on heavy cotton cloth same weight as "Indian Head."

Paintings and Colors. The entire painting to be done in a first-class manner throughout. All work to be executed by skilled artists as per designs and color schemes shown and passed on. Only best grade, durable colors and materials to be used.

Framework. All framework to be made of good, clear, dry, well-seasoned white pine lumber of appropriate dimensions, put together by mortise and tenon with all needed toggle rails and angle braces properly clout-nailed and joined in best approved manner. All wings

requiring profile to be supplied with same properly scrimmed.

Battens for drop curtains, drop scenes and borders to be of best quality dry white pine, surfaced with rounded edges.

Hardware. All doors and windows to be provided with needed hinges, door buttons, flat cleats, lashing cleats, threshold irons, batten plates, etc.

Sets and Settings

With retrospective eye, look back over the shows you have seen, vaudeville and otherwise, and endeavor to analyze just how vital a part the stage appointments, settings and dressing played in making them either "great," "good," "fair," or "poor."

The stage establishes an illusion: the audience sits in a semi-darkened auditorium to see, feel and have created for it conditions which inspire grief, excitement, mirth and other emotions. It follows that unless there is a maximum of the "atmosphere" tending to convey the desired impression, the illusion will fall short of its intent.

How inconsistent, then, are cheap and tawdry settings where the idea is to create an atmosphere of refinement and elegance. How out of keeping with the intent of a rapid-fire singing, talking and comedy act is a dim or insufficiently lighted stage. What a short-sighted policy it is that permits the use of the same set of furniture and properties for practically every playlet that is presented in a vaudeville theatre. Conceive how ridiculous it must seem to the intelligent audience for a theatre to present a famous artist, perhaps "in one," backed by the same drop which earlier has backed an acrobatic "turn." There is, perhaps, no feature connected with vaudeville in the average theatre, which deserves more attention, or in which there is more room for improvement.

Shakespeare said: "The play's the thing," and though this was many years ago, the decades that have passed have proved him right in the superlative degree. It matters not that the theatre may be absolutely modern, comfortable, well-lighted, ventilated and heated; it matters not that your staff is all that could be desired; unless the show is "there," all these other things will not pull dollars into the box-office. In the final analysis it will be the show that will get the money. All other features

of operation, all thoughtful courtesies and practices, are but preliminaries; their purpose is to instill into the patron a feeling of friendliness and satisfaction which will put him in a mental attitude of greatest receptivity; which will leave his mind encumbered by no angry or hurt remembrance of things gone wrong in the process of purchasing his tickets and getting into the theatre and to his seat—which will leave him free to sit back in comfort and enter into the spirit of the show.

Therefore, let us consider with proper appreciation of its importance, the matter of providing our show with the suitable sets, settings and "atmosphere."

In the first place, let it be said that too often this matter receives but routine, and at best, indifferent attention from the house manager. In the usual course he receives the "plots" from the artist or from his booking office. For the uninformed, it should be said that these plots, as a general proposition, give the following information:

NAME OF THE ACT AND ITS BILLING.
NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN THE ACT (men, women).
NUMBER OF DRESSING-ROOMS REQUIRED.
TIME OF ACT.

Scene Plot. Advising if act works in "one," "two," "three," "full stage," etc. If opens in "one" and closes "two" or full, or vice versa, number of minutes in each position. Number of lines required and location. What scenery and drops, etc., carried. What house scenery, drops, etc., required.

Prop Plot. Specifying what "properties," not carried by the act, should be secured by house property-man. These should be ready, on stage, on arrival of act. It is pertinent here to say that acts do not call for props with the idea of making unusual or unnecessary work for the property-man, but because they want the props for use in their act, and these should be secured.

Light Plot. Specifying electrical and other effects desired for illuminating the act.

Publicity Plot. Most booking offices now make it a practice to furnish their clients with publicity and press matter concerning the acts booked. As this often contains either excerpts from or entire reviews as published by the press it is generally quite descriptive of the act, and forms a somewhat dependable means, in the ab-

sence of other information, of giving the manager an accurate idea of just what the act is.

When these plots are received they should be the occasion for a three-cornered conference by the manager, stage-manager and property-man. If the electrical plot is unusual, the electrician should be a party to this conference, as should any other employee whose department may be called upon for unusual effort in connection with a particular show or act.

A conscientious, earnest effort should be made to study out a routine of settings and sets that will provide the individual acts and the entire show with appropriate surroundings; plan to avoid waits (where sometimes two full stage acts follow), and to present the show in a manner which will, so far as the sets and settings are concerned, impress audiences favorably. There is such a thing, in actual practice, as getting better work out of the artist by giving him a setting and surroundings that inspire him to do his best.

The Stage Setting. The setting of the stage seldom receives from the property department a maximum of intelligent thought and attention. Consistency in this department is indeed a jewel, and as has been suggested before,

it is unreasonable to expect an intelligent audience (and these days audiences are pretty wise) to give serious thought or approval to a playlet offered in a setting equipped with broken-down, dilapidated and dingy furnishings when the synopsis indicates that the action takes place in a palatial residence. And the hump-backed, broken lounge, or the rickety chair or table has too often caused things to occur in an act which were never designated as "business" in the script.

Therefore, see to it that the props are in keeping with the intent of the action. *A bas* the old decrepit and funny-looking imitation-marble clock on the dirty, dingy mantel; away with the ancient chromo in the dusty, dull and nicked frame; abolish the venerable, time-worn, discouraged artificial palms that have for so long occupied posts of honor perched atop the soiled and ancient pedestals, where, even to the hundredth time, the audiences look at them again and again; junk the dejected, lifeless old imitation-leather lounge with the fringe of hair protruding from broken places in its upholstering; scrap the gangly-legged chair, the dirty tablecloth, and all such things. Replace them, either by purchase or by a borrowing arrangement with a real furniture store, and the

money, effort and trouble thus expended will be amply repaid to you through the box-office. Paint the tabourets, pedestals, mantels and such fixtures; brighten up the statuettes with a coat of paint or varnish; send the portières to the cleaner, and generally refresh things, and then KEEP THEM so. Do not permit attention to this feature of your shows to relax a moment.

Care should be taken that all furniture is thoroughly wiped before being placed in the set; the front row audience can see dust and dirt. Artificial flowers of the better quality, in real vases and displayed with good taste and in not undue profusion, add much to the general effect.

Choose picture frames with an idea—not to their cheapness, but to their actual utility as one of the features of the "stage picture."

Hangings in good taste, blending in harmony with the general color scheme, offer an opportunity for pleasing embellishment.

If acts working "in one" and using a grand piano call for a setting, furnish it in good taste, using piano lamp, settee, floor flower-stand, flowers, etc.

Change, add to and keep alive the stock of bric-à-brac, and when placing it in sets see that

good judgment is exercised. Strive for the ultimate in good taste.

In hanging of portières, a valance should be used, covering the pole and top of arch. Three or four complete sets of portières, with valances to match, should be part of the stage equipment. Valances, pleated and plain, with or without galoon braid, are all attractive, and this variety should be on hand. The customary red and green hangings should be avoided; the new shades of blue, mulberry, old-rose, old-gold, maroon and royal purple in the newer fabrics are well worth their cost when investing in portières.

Observe carefully that there is harmony in the color scheme of the scenery, carpets and draperies; avoid the rather frequently encountered combination of a green carpet, red upholstered furniture, old-rose hangings and perhaps a blue rug or two.

Observe this point also as to furniture: never set an interior, for instance, with a mahogany piano, white enamelled tabourets, oak table and mission settee. If part in mission, then all so. If part mahogany, then all so, except for variations that are in good taste. If a set is in Louis XV, or Jacobean or Colonial, or any other special or period furniture, stick to it consistently for that particular set. And, in

this connection, DO NOT set a sketch the plot of which indicates action taking place in the winter, with curtains and drapes of light and airy cretonne.

It is often the case that managers fail to realize that the "sketch," its plot, title and cast, change with every new one that comes; at least one would so judge, because through a whole season every act of this type will be presented in the same old "set," with the same old furniture and props, and often season after season.

It is urgently recommended that a theatre should not start its season with one or two interior sets; it should by all means possess three or four, but at the very least two light-toned and one sombre, or dark and heavy, not including plain chamber or kitchen sets.

Periodically, and not less often than at the close of each season, these sets should be repainted, changing the designs and colors. This can be accomplished at a comparatively insignificant cost by arranging for a scenic artist to come to the theatre to do the work, instead of shipping the scenery to a studio.

The crew should be thoroughly trained in making sets. Lack of careful and sufficient bracing at doors, so that, when a door is opened

or closed, the entire side of the scene waves dizzily about as if struck by a cyclone, indicates incompetency.

All joints on interior sets should be tightly lashed. If the sides do not meet perfectly, it may be due to stile warpage, which should have attention from the stage carpenter. There should be no open cracks between pieces, such as can be seen from the audience, or through which streaks of light show. It is somewhat disconcerting to a person watching a sketch to see an individual on the stage behind one of these cracks, using it for a peep-hole; or to have a ray of light from back stage shining through it while the action on the stage is in semi-darkness. Such things destroy the artistic value of the setting, and distract attention from the player's efforts.

Dressing-Rooms

There are a few things to be borne in mind in connection with this section of the theatre. In the first place, it should be remembered that the actor is subject to the same influences, weaknesses and sensations as affect other human beings. There is, however, this exception, that the artist is, as a rule, prone to be just a little

more grateful for small attentions than is any other class, and more quickly responds to cheerful, comfortable environment. Perhaps this is because in the past it has often been the custom of the management to be indifferent to the personal comfort and convenience of artists.

The success or failure of an act often depends upon that indefinable quality known as "personality." It follows that to get his act "over" with maximum results the artist must be in good humor with himself, the management and his audience. Nothing which can influence him in this direction is unimportant. The artist is the backbone of a theatre's success—to him, finally, passes the entire responsibility for making the show a hit, a mediocre success or a failure. Therefore his comfort while he is in the theatre should be looked to with care.

Too often theatres are built without reference to the necessity for clean, airy and reasonably roomy quarters for the artists.

If the theatre is already built, the manager will have to get along with dressing-rooms as arranged, but they can be kept clean, well lighted, warm and cozy. If they are now dark, dingy and dirty, that condition can be changed and, take the author's word for it, money thus

spent will prove to have been profitably invested.

Dressing-rooms should be finished in light color, should have ample lights and a clean plate-glass mirror, even if small, rather than a wavy, dirty and cracked one. There should be an outlet which will permit the use of an electric iron, and the theatre should have such an iron available and encourage its use by the artists. A little current and a five-dollar iron, coupled with an invitation to use both, may mean a considerable difference in the appearance of an artist's wardrobe—and if the manager is not interested enough to provide the facilities, can it be reasonably expected that the artist, at considerable personal expense and inconvenience, shall have his clothes pressed daily?

Above all, the dressing-rooms should be CLEAN. A good-sized rug should be provided for the floor, bearing in mind always that scantily clad men and women will be using these quarters. The rooms should, therefore, not be the habitat of cockroaches, rats, and other vermin. It will prove well worth the trouble and expense if they are kept clean and comfortable, warm in winter and cool in summer.

As a rule, the multiplicity of signs that often clutter dressing-rooms and hallways are, to say the least, of doubtful value. If it is desired that there shall be notices on the stage directing the artist where to eat, which drug store handles make-up material, etc., etc., then it is best to fix up a regular bulletin board for this purpose, on stage, and posted close to the official call-board of the house.

Artists now-a-days know that it is a violation of their contract to appear at a club or any place in the city other than the theatre being played; they know that smoking is forbidden on the stage and in dressing-rooms, usually by city ordinances, as well as by common practice, and the tendency to have too many signs, notices and instructions posted serves to annul the effectiveness of all.

This sign, posted conspicuously, is suggested as meeting all needs:

NOTICE TO ARTISTS

This is a reputable theatre or you would not play it. Your reputation as an artist is in keeping with the traditions of the profession or you would not have been booked. The management expects, therefore, that you will govern your ac-

tions here by those well-known rules which custom has established. Your failure to do so will result in immediate cancellation of your act and a full report on the matter to our booking connection.

THE MANAGEMENT.

In the event that the reader is planning the erection of a theatre, it is urgently recommended that he take note of the following points for consideration in the construction of the dressing-rooms:

Size. 8 feet by 10 feet at least; 9 feet by 12 feet or larger if possible, and there should be at least two rooms 12 feet by 18 feet or larger for troop or "girl" acts. Ten rooms will ordinarily be sufficient, though if twelve can be provided it is advisable to have that number.

Lighting should be ample, it being remembered that the artist "makes up" to appear before very bright foot and spotlights, which will show up poor "make-up" resulting from insufficiently lighted dressing-rooms. An outlet should be provided at each side of the dressing mirror, and one or two at the top. Or an improved manner of lighting

the artist's face and giving better results in making-up is the following arrangement: Attach to each side of the mirror frame for the full length of glass, a three-quarter round, 3 inches in diameter, metal trough to contain 15-watt lamps connected about 7 inches apart from bottom to top of trough; the trough to be painted two coats of flat white inside, and outside to be painted same color as mirror frame, both of which should match dressing-room walls. This method of lighting will throw light direct on the artist's face and afford much better illumination for details of make-up. There should also be an outlet for plugging in electric iron, and curling-iron heater, also fan outlet.

Ventilation. All that the lay-out and construction will permit; windows of opaque or wire-glass where possible and if it is proposed to operate during summer, electric fans should be provided.

Hot and Cold Water should both be provided, with a substantial lavatory, clean and sanitary.

Make-up Shelf. 18 inches wide, 31 inches from the floor and 6 feet long with two mirrors.

plate glass, about 18 inches by 24 inches. In the large "troop" rooms these shelves should be correspondingly longer and have the number of mirrors increased to about four for each shelf. At least one full-length mirror should be provided, preferably where all the artists can use it.

Wardrobe Hooks. 6 feet from the floor, 10 inches apart, all around wall except where would come over dressing shelf or lavatory.

Chairs. Two substantial dining or bentwood chairs to each of the smaller rooms and about eight for the larger rooms.

In General. The doors should be provided with good locks, for which keys should be tagged after the fashion of hotel keys. There should be two or more toilets provided; preferably in separated locations, one exclusively for "WOMEN" and the other for "MEN." If the building plans, plot and space available can be made to provide it, there should be one or two dressing-rooms on stage level; not with the idea that they are for "stars" so much as to take care of the act which has to make one or many quick changes of costume during the show. In addition to dressing-rooms located on stage, a

portable dressing-room should be provided. This should be about 7 feet by 7 feet, collapsible frame covered with heavy denim and arranged to fly back to wall when not in use. Doors to dressing-rooms should be not less than 34 inches wide, to allow for admission of large trunks. Rooms should be numbered, and a suitable board, with numbered hooks, should be provided on stage where artists are expected to hang keys when leaving theatre. A switch which will turn off all lights in the dressing-room should be located close to the door in a convenient place to be turned off and on as artist leaves or enters dressing-room. A small card above switch reading "PLEASE TURN OFF LIGHTS ON LEAVING ROOM" will result in the saving of much current. Rugs of proper size, which can be removed, beaten and sunned weekly, should be provided in each room.

CHAPTER IV

ADVERTISING AND PUBLICITY

HE would be a brave individual indeed who assumed to "know it all" concerning this vast and complicated subject. No person has become master of advertising and publicity, for the reason that human ingenuity is constantly creating new ideas and practices. However, certain methods of advertising which have been tried and found successful may be briefly outlined and discussed.

No form of enterprise is more dependent upon advertising than is the theatre; publicity is the breath of its life and is vital to its success.

Advertising, as it is generally understood, is the art of selling by means of publicity; but advertising does not consist merely of the use of newspapers, bill boards, window-displays,

etc. Advertising from the theatrical point of view embraces everything that may attract attention; and the best and most effective is "by word of mouth." The unsolicited praise of a pleased patron, given because he has been genuinely entertained and gratified, is actually priceless; it is sincere, unquestionable as to motive, and immediately productive of results. If a theatre could uniformly present shows which caused everyone seeing them to urge his friends to do likewise, other advertising would be superfluous. Every effort should be made to impress the patron favorably, not only with the show itself, but as well with the treatment accorded him by the staff, with the comforts of the house and the little attentions and courtesies provided by a thoughtful management. An usher who is impudent is an adverse advertisement; a treasurer who is pleasant is a favorable one.

Some men are born advertisers; they see possibilities in the most trivial things and take advantage of them. It is not always the "big city" manager who gets the best results; frequently the most effective advertising is done by the manager with a small house in a small town. Results, and results only, indicate the value of the methods adopted.

Coupled with every form of advertising, and making it effective, must be the value behind the advertising; no amount of money spent, no cleverness in attracting attention, no happily-conceived schemes, will avail if there be nothing to substantiate the claims made. Every factor in the actual operation of the theatre must support the advertising. No one can fool all the people all the time, and while clever publicity may induce an initial visit to a theatre, there will likely be no second visit if the advertising proves misleading or palpably false. The vaudeville theatre differs in no respect from any other extensively advertised product or service, and no advertising will continue to sell an inferior product or service.

Therefore, the super-superlative, even the superlative, should be avoided, in describing the show, act or theatre, unless it be really superlative. The attractive presentation of the truth is the best, indeed the only, policy to pursue.

Newspapers

Two classes of newspaper advertising or publicity are considered. First, display advertising; second, readers, criticisms, special stories, etc.

Display Advertising in the daily papers is, by proved practice, one of the most effective forms of establishing and maintaining patronage for a theatre. BUT, the newspaper advertisement fills only one field; it does not cover the entire needs of the theatre; other forms of advertising are, in their way, and considering their cost, just as essential and proportionately valuable.

No rule as to the amount of space which should be used can be laid down, as local conditions, advertising tariffs, established customs and individual preferences would subject any such rule to too much variation. With reference to the amount of space to be used, it is suggested that only needlessly costly results come from a competition between theatres as to which will use the most, and that the standing of a theatre or the merit of its attractions is in no wise indicated to the public by the use of more space than is legitimately necessary to display its advertisement effectively.

It is quite true that in a general way a large display is more effective than a small one, but this does not mean that a quarter-page will actually bring more business to the box-office than an eighth; in fact, the eighth if better written and displayed, will get as much or more. On the other hand, a "flash" now and then, to cover

an extra strong bill or act, has proved worth the additional cost in numberless instances. The guiding rule should be that the amount of space be governed by real needs, without respect to what the "other fellow" thinks he needs, or uses.

The accepted practice is to run a larger advertisement than usual on Sundays. There are several reasons for this. Usually papers devote a page or more in their Sunday issues to theatrical news and features; this serves to concentrate the attention of the reader upon affairs theatrical, and it is well to impress upon him, while he is in this mood, the attractiveness of a certain theatre and show. Readers have, as a rule, more time on Sundays to peruse their papers, hence a more detailed description of the show is advisable.

If a limited space is used, it should NEVER be crowded with matter set in small type; for the busy reader will "pass it up." It is better to err on the side of brevity than of detail.

Plain, readable, boldly stated facts, set in striking fonts of type, should be the form used; borders that will make the display "stick out" are desirable; also a heading that will distinguish the advertisement from all others on the page the minute the reader's eye turns to

that sheet, and if possible a certain fixed position in each issue of the paper.

The use of a catchline or slogan is very desirable—BUT unless it is original and MEANS SOMETHING, it is better left out.

EVERY advertisement should include the starting time of shows, the telephone number of theatre, and (in the larger cities) its street address.

As a general proposition, it will be found that newspapers, where more than one is published in a city, are very sensitive to and resentful of a larger space being used in one than in another. Advertising rates are based upon circulation, and usually they are higher for a theatre than for a merchant. It is the writer's experience that the best and soundest practice is to give to EVERY paper the theatre regularly uses the same sized advertisement. Usually papers will not expect that the money expenditure with each shall be the same, but that the amount of space used in each shall be.

In the choice of publications to be used, it is suggested that EVERY DAILY paper, except of course in a city like New York or Chicago, where there are such a great number, should be patronized; not only for the reason that each has its more or less loyal followers, but as well because, despite duplicated circulation, it

has proved worth while to reach the reading public as often and from as many different angles as is practicable. Then, too, there is the matter of being upon a friendly footing with all of the papers—an important thing.

While all the publicity that can be secured is desirable, weekly and semi-weekly papers devoted to special interests are likely to be duplicated circulation to a class of readers who look to the daily papers for their theatrical information. There is no end to the number of mediums that can be used, but unless a good deal of money is to be wasted, these should be carefully chosen and their value thoroughly analyzed.

Except when the primary idea is to cultivate the friendship of some individual or institution, the purchase of space in special programs, as for fairs, auto shows, bazaars, high school magazines, etc., should be discouraged, as all of this type of advertising—considered merely as such—is not worth what it costs. If it is known that the theatre is a "live prospect" for this type of stuff, many hundreds of dollars may be wasted on it during a season.

It is splendid practice to adopt at the beginning of a season a schedule to govern the amount of display space that will be used and covering other advertising that is to be done, to

make an appropriation for this, and then STICK to the schedule or budget, as laid out. It goes without saying that this should be based upon a careful and thorough study of the situation, needs of the house and the local conditions as to opposition, etc.

Advertising should not be spasmodic, twenty inches one day, four the next, and then perhaps but one, with an idea of economy to make up for the "flash"; this policy has proved wrong in practice. Better the consistent, continuous policy, with deviation therefrom only in the EXCEPTIONAL case, with something *really* exceptional as a reason for it. Guard against a "penny wise and pound foolish" policy in purchasing advertising; provide liberally but wisely for this department, and avoid waste.

In making contracts with the papers covering the amount of space to be used during a certain period, care should be taken not to bind oneself to use more than will be needed, simply to get the lowest rate. It is customary to make a rate for the use of say a thousand lines or inches during a certain period, and if there is a lower rate for two thousand lines or inches, and the theatre uses the greater amount, the lower rate will apply to all space used. If this is not the custom in a particular city, at the

time of making contracts a stipulation may be inserted providing that if more space than is called for by the contract is used by the advertiser, the lower rate shall apply to the entire contract.

In newspaper parlance an "inch" means one inch deep by one column wide, and a "line" means an agate line one-fourteenth of an inch deep, one column wide. Thus it is seen that where the line rate is quoted, the inch rate may be found by multiplying by fourteen.

Contracts should not be hastily entered into; everything should be clearly stipulated for the protection of both parties.

For instance, some papers agree that for every inch of display used, an inch of free readers will be given. If this is the policy, it should be so stated IN THE CONTRACT; the management of the paper may change, and if these things are a matter of record the likelihood of misunderstandings is obviated.

Copy should be handed in promptly, for a paper cannot be expected to keep its forms waiting. The manager should be posted as to the hours when the forms are "locked," and should understand that if his copy is late he will forfeit his right to a preferred position. The composing room of a newspaper is operated on

a strict schedule, and habitually late arrival of copy is likely to create a distaste for handling it, with the result that it may be carelessly set-up, blurred and possibly full of typographical errors, unavoidable in the rush to get it in at all. An occasional visit of the manager to the "ad alley" will do no harm if made in the slack hours, and by taking into consideration the personal and human element, he will find the increased interest felt in him and his house by the men, from the foreman to the "devil," a valuable asset.

A display should not be bizarre, or freakish. It should, however, have a "punch" and should, in homely phrase, "stick out like a sore finger." Copy should be clean-cut, original and in good taste. If there is a decided difference in the style of make-up of and in the class of readers appealed to by various papers in a city, the copy should be adapted to the particular style of each paper, conservative for the more staid and less so for the more "popular" appeal, with, however, due regard always for truth and good taste. It is wise to head the display with a cut or block, the consistent use of which identifies the theatre's advertisement at once. Space costing a dollar an inch should be made to earn ten.

Criticisms, Special Stories, Reviews. Theatrical matters are of interest to the general public—this is recognized by the progressive newspaper, and most of them are not only willing, but eager to publish such items as have legitimate news or featuré value. But it should be borne in mind that the fantastic and unbelievable, the hackneyed story (such as the time-worn fable concerning theft of the leading lady's jewels) and the glaringly inconsistent one will probably be rejected by the editor of any well-conducted newspaper.

If repeated efforts have been made to "put over" this sort of story, the editor will probably grow distrustful of all matter submitted by the theatre, and be inclined to throw it out without even a reading. Editors are sufficiently human to resent having anything "put over" on them and will make entree to their reading columns very difficult for the ill-advised manager or press-agent who tries to plant "dog-stories," as they are commonly known. It is, also, a question whether such stuff has any weight with readers; so much has been written concerning the theatre that the general public is fairly well-informed as to the tricks of press-agents. The confidence of editors should be secured by the submission of nothing but legit-

imate stuff, for, once lost, this confidence is very difficult to regain.

Timely stories concerning the activities of the theatre, improvements contemplated or being made, changes in the major positions in the staff, little "human interest" stories about the artists, and specials concerning headline or other acts are usually very acceptable to papers.

Naturally, the showing given to such stories must depend upon their relative importance to the day's news. Frequently a rush of vitally interesting happenings in the world's affairs will crowd out a theatre story. This is not a reason for the manager's assuming that the paper is discriminating against him; the exercise of a little common-sense will show him that the editor is running a newspaper, not a theatre, and that it is the first and foremost duty of a newspaper to present the important news as quickly as possible. That is what the public demands and what the editor must give. The "killed" story may be good for use on some other occasion, or very probably the editor will take pains to make extra space for another story in a future issue less crowded with news features.

The practice of newspapers in "reviewing" shows should receive every encouragement from

managers. This gives the public disinterested information as to the merit of attractions, and while it is true that the review is not always, perhaps rarely, as good as the manager thinks it should be, it is the writer's observation that the press tries to be absolutely fair, and this is all that can or should be expected. In fact, the manager on friendly terms with the paper sometimes receives a shade the best of it.

The critic should be seated in a favorable location, should be supplied at once with a program, and if he wishes to interview any of the artists, should be afforded every facility for doing so.

"Timely" interviews are of interest and can usually be arranged if there is an artist on the bill with something interesting to say. With the co-operation of the society editor, interesting stories or interviews can be secured with feminine headliners; the sporting editor can now and then use something in connection with an act which has a record in this field.

It is sometimes the case that papers will accept a review written by manager or press-agent of a theatre; this privilege will be ultimately withdrawn by any reputable paper, if it is found that the reviews are not reasonably accurate and in keeping with the facts.

The wisest plan to follow in these circumstances is one of conservative praise for the show with special mention of such acts as actually have gone well with the audience; fulsome and exaggerated praise should by all means be avoided, for a public cannot be continually exploited by such means. After one or two experiences with reviews found to be at variance with the facts, a general distrust of all reviews is engendered in the mind of prospective theatre-goers. If a theatre have the reputation of presenting, week in and week out, shows of a high average of excellence, there is no need for these futile efforts to fool the public.

The public is impressed, not only by the incident of the moment, but by the molding process continued through a long period of consistent effort. The impression gained from a single incident, however, may be almost indelible; therefore the risqué in either advertisements or stories should be avoided; there is no excuse for conveying the idea that the theatre houses a show for the so-called "live ones." For example, in advertising a group of classical dancers, the fact that their wardrobe is scant should not be featured; rather, the aesthetic and beautiful points should be emphasized—and this may result in securing not only the patronage

of those who might come with an idea of looking at nude limbs but as well of those who have a sincere appreciation for and knowledge of art and the beautiful. The latter WILL NOT be drawn by advertisements and stories of the attraction in which the feature of nudity is vulgarly or coarsely handled.

Show-going is a habit, attendance at the theatre is a luxury; if by consistent and truthful publicity in both display advertising and news columns, a theatre is established as the one which it is the "habit" of the best people to attend, the others will trail along.

It is a thoughtful practice for the manager to note little items of news which may drift in to him, and to give these to the reporter when he calls, or to telephone the papers if the news is of sufficient importance and is for any reason not likely to be caught by the regular reporters. In the event of prominent persons visiting the theatre, giving box-parties, line-parties, etc., the names of host and hostess and guests should be secured and handed to the society editors. If any untoward incident has occurred about the theatre, the papers should be informed by the manager; it is not a wise policy to attempt to keep these things covered, for if they have, as is usually the case a real news

value, the papers will publish something concerning them. It is better for both papers and theatre that the story be given correctly by the proper person than that it should be ferreted out from other sources and a garbled version reach the public. If friendly relations have been established with the newspapers, it will be found that the editors will treat such matters with consideration and due regard for the business interests of the house. The goodwill of a reporter who can be bribed with a cigar, or something more valuable, is never worth the price of the bribe. His usefulness to any paper will be short-lived. Fairness, courtesy and honest dealing are the only means of establishing permanently cordial relations which are so important to the theatre and press alike.

Special stories, of legitimate interest, occur with considerable frequency in the theatrical business. There is rarely a bill which does not bring at least one artist who, if diligent inquiry be made, cannot furnish the basis for an interesting, readable story. These are valuable to the theatre, and to the paper. The public, through reading such stories, comes finally to believe that the theatre is booking real talent and people worth writing and reading about. The day of the overdrawn, exaggerated, highly-col-

ored story has passed; there was a time, when the public was not so wise, when these were productive of results, but the vaudeville theatre has become a fixed institution, a factor in the community life, worthy of respect and recognition, and the policy that pays now is the one which recognizes the importance of dignifying, in every way, the prestige of the theatre, its entertainments and its players.

The importance of illustrations should not be overlooked. It should be the constant effort of the manager to get "cuts" into the papers. Generally, editors, when they have space to spare, are glad to use a cut of a pretty woman with some bit of matter about her; the reader likes illustrations, and the cut is a potent factor in the effectiveness of publicity. Cuts should be of the proper screen, that is, of the kind that will print well in newspapers. Generally, newspapers prefer half-tones in 55-line to 85-line screen, as finer ones merely print up a black blur. Zinc etchings, made from pen and ink drawings, generally show up excellently in the newspaper.

The Sunday "lay-out" featured by many papers is usually made in the newspaper office from photographs furnished by the theatres. Clear, well defined, contrastive photographs,

preferably in black and white, are best for this use.

Billboards

Considerable attention should be paid to the actual making of one, three and eight-sheet boards, with special reference to their durability and weather-resisting qualities. Otherwise much needless expense may be incurred in renewing them each season; a little more time and money spent on the first construction will make boards that will last through several seasons.

On all boards, the flat surface upon which the paper is posted should allow for a two-inch margin all around; in other words, this surface, for a one-sheet, should be 32 inches wide and 46 inches high, the standard one-sheet being 28 inches wide by 42 inches high. The two-inch margin all around this provided, should be blanked in with white paper. The surface upon which paper is to be pasted should never be painted, as no paste has been found for practical use that will stick paper to a painted surface when exposed to the sun and weather.

Substantial galvanized iron backs, fastened to 2-inch frame, corners braced with angle irons; back painted with two coats of asphaltum, frame painted with two good coats of oil color and then Spar-varnished, will make stands that will last for many seasons with anything like reasonable handling and care. They should be painted each season, front and back.

When boards are set up in permanent or semi-permanent locations, a tin flashing should always be placed at the top, to carry off rain-water and prevent rotting of the frame.

Inventories of boards should be made annually, and the employee in charge of them required to account satisfactorily for any shortages. These are a part of the theatre's equipment, and deserve the same thorough, careful handling and attention that other equipment should receive.

Posters, Paper, etc. If paper is to be posted at all, the attendant expense is only justified if intelligent attention is given to typography, wording and general effectiveness thereof. Remember, posters must be so arranged that "he who runs may read;" rarely do people read in detail what is printed upon them; hence it follows that their message must be not only brief,

but potent; quick, but with a "punch," and what they have to say must be said in a very few words. Therefore, the message of the poster is limited to essentials—essentials effectively stated.

It follows that locations should be carefully chosen. In fact, they should be selected by the manager personally, and it should be borne in mind that it is a waste of money and effort to post paper on inconspicuous back walls, up alleys and in other out-of-the-way spots. Choice locations, up and down the main arteries of travel, near important corners, transfer points, depots and gathering places, and in the heart of the city as much as possible, are the desirable ones. Paper may also be posted with good results at the intersections of automobile roads, and a certain amount should be kept up in small nearby towns from which it is possible to draw by means of interurban lines. The manager should check his locations weekly, and see that paper for the current and coming shows is properly posted. It is good policy to aim high in the matter of locations; the chances are that the shots will strike a fair average, since so much depends upon how many favorites the bill-poster is trying to play.

Individual large stands are better than those crowded into the middle of a 200-foot board, or lost in the maze of a double- or triple-decker stand.

Where city ordinances do not forbid the practice of "strong arming," one-sheet boards up and down both sides of the main streets are very effective. This is usually done by putting out boards late Saturday night, leaving them over Sunday, and removing them Sunday night. The locations for these must be "squared" with the merchants controlling the curbs, otherwise the boards may be confiscated.

The eight-sheet is, perhaps, the most effective size of paper, when good locations can be secured. Where large spaces are difficult or impossible to get, then the three- and on down to the one-sheet must be resorted to, if bill-posting is done. Local conditions govern this work and its extent, but the intent of this article is briefly to cover the practices that have generally proved profitable.

Unless the theatre owns, or leases for long terms, locations that will accommodate 24-sheet stands, the use of such large paper is not as a rule justified, the cost of making weekly changes being excessive. Where the same interest controls more than one house in a city, it is often

better that it own its own boards and control all its own locations, maintaining its own wagon and bill-posting force which, when not at that work, can be utilized in some other way about some of the theatres.

The cost of bill-posting varies—ranging from 4 to 10 cents per sheet.

The permanently located, painted, 20 to 24-sheet stand, is considered good advertising. It should be painted at least once each season and be kept bright and clean at all times. The matter of illuminating it is left entirely to the reader's discretion.

It is foolish to buy paper and pay for posting unless it is posted right, straight, true and with proper joints, not having more paste on its front than on its back. When standing or stock paper is used, the crew should go out after storms and heavy rains to replace "washdowns," and when the paper begins to look ragged, it should be scraped off and the boards freshly covered. Allowing several thicknesses of paper to accumulate on a board will result in upturned and unsightly edges. Boards should be scraped off regularly with sharp hoe or painter's scraping knife. Better to blank a board out with white paper and leave it so, than have it ragged-looking, or with a one-sheet posted in

the center of a three-sheet board; a three in an eight-sheet board, and so on. This sort of thing leaves in the onlooker's mind an impression that the house is either short of money with which to purchase paper, or mighty careless as to how it is posted.

Bill-posting is but one form of the advertising that a theatre uses. In recent years, many vaudeville theatres have entirely abandoned this sort of advertising, claiming that better results are secured through expending the same amount of money in other directions. It is undeniably true that mercantile advertising on billboards has come to be such an effectively conducted proposition that it has to a considerable extent crowded the theatre out of a field in which the latter was the pioneer.

However, this is a question to be decided by each individual manager or owner; if paper is to be used, the following information concerning it may be of value:

The paper customarily used for theatrical posters is known as "50-pound poster white." It is generally stocked in canary, pink, blue and green, though these tints are a little more costly than plain white.

The standard stock sizes of poster stands are as follows:

HALF-SHEET—14 inches wide by 42 inches high.

ONE-SHEET—28 inches wide by 42 inches high.

THREE-SHEET—One-sheet (42 inches) wide by three-sheets (84 inches) high.

SIX-SHEET—Two-sheets (84 inches) wide by three-sheets (84 inches) high.

EIGHT-SHEET—Two-sheets (84 inches) wide by four-sheets (112 inches) high.

TWENTY-FOUR-SHEET—Six-sheets (210 inches) wide by four-sheets (112 inches) high.

As to color combinations, there is an almost endless variety of these, and by using paper and ink of various colors, extremely effective poster work may be secured. For instance, the following one-color printings are effective:

Blue, green or red on white paper.

Red or black on yellow paper.

Effective two-color combinations:

Red and blue on white or yellow paper.

Red and green on white or yellow paper.

Red and black on white or yellow paper.

Black and any of the above colors on white or yellow paper.

When more than two colors are used, a great variety of effects can be obtained, and of course the use of cuts, headings, etc., may render still more effective the advertising poster.

Display types, sizes and faces vary so greatly, that it would be almost impossible to enumerate the many kinds. In general practice, it will be found sufficient to make up the copy and leave it to the show-printer to get out an effective poster. Copy should be lettered plainly, the dating should be carefully checked, and all matter be in the hands of the printer in sufficient time to allow of his using care in the work and of getting it back to the theatre in good season. Slow movement of mail and delays in express shipments should be anticipated if the boards are not to be left blank at some time or other.

The studious advertiser will devise differing color schemes from week to week, and will find variety in the use of new make-ups and types. A deep border line around posters sometimes adds to their effectiveness, and the color of this can be varied with pleasing results.

The standard size of a window card is 14 inches by 22 inches; the usual stock is four, five or six-ply white or tinted board, sufficiently stiff to stand without bending, and to resist weather.

The same general remarks as to color combinations, typography, etc., as were made in connection with posters, apply to window cards.

Show printing should be entrusted only to an establishment making a specialty of this sort of work. Such concerns employ an expert and it is wise for the manager to make use of his knowledge and ability. It is generally sufficient to submit a lay-out showing the relative importance of the display.

A small investment in a name-plate, or special block, to use as a "heading" on posters and cards, is worth while. The show-printer will gladly submit suggested designs for this.

If bill-posting is done, let it be consistently and continuously, not spasmodically, done. If passersby are to be accustomed to see paper in a certain location, it should be kept there for them—freshly posted always, and in keeping in its appearance, style and brightness, with the standing of the theatre.

Window and Street Car

Window locations should be in down-town stores; in elevators of busy buildings; at popular soda-fountains; lunch stands; shine parlors; barber shops, etc. There is no use wasting cards down side-street locations and where the passes issued in exchange for the privilege of placing them bring in a class of people who

should not mingle with the more refined patrons. Passes which call for seats in the best sections should not be issued to individuals who are likely to smell "garlicky" or be poorly dressed.

Many women do not frequent the down-town portions of the city, but the house-wife does get to her neighborhood drug-store, grocery and butcher-shop almost every day. These neighborhood locations are sometimes neglected in the matter of window-display, but the manager is very short-sighted who overlooks any method of appeal to the women, who form so large, constant and enthusiastic a portion of his audience. If a woman has been accustomed to seeing an attractive card on her daily round of marketing, she is quite likely to include a visit to the theatre on her less frequent excursions down-town. A small number of displays judiciously placed will bring better results than will an indiscriminate scattering of many cards in one or two windows or locations. Employees are prone to this practice as a saving of time. They also occasionally attempt to curry favor with the general manager or head of a circuit by concentrating posters and cards on all the streets leading from the depot to the theatre, with the idea that when he comes to town he

will think the city well posted. This is most likely to defeat its own ends; conscientious service is the only sort that really pays.

A watch should be kept for stores newly vacated, and the location, if desirable, should be promptly pre-empted for exclusive use. Permission to do this, however, should always be obtained from the proper persons; otherwise a suit for trespass may result. "Post No Bills" notices placed by property-owners should be invariably respected.

Advertisements on the dash of street cars are desirable, if they do not cost out of proportion to their value. The larger the city, the more cars and the higher the rate. Inside cards in street cars (12 inches by 16 inches) at the price usually charged, are not worth the cost. Generally, the street car companies will make a very favorable rate for the dash space, as it is their policy to encourage, so far as consistent, all down-town amusements.

Sanity, consistency, good judgment and alertness should characterize effective outdoor advertising; the exercise of these qualities will largely determine whether it is worth what it costs.

Lobby Display

It is in the lobby that the first concrete impression of the theatre itself is given the prospective patron. If the theatre is centrally located, many people will stroll into and through the lobby, look over the display and be influenced materially in favor of or against patronizing the house as the display is either effective or lacking in "pull-in" power.

Therefore, this first impression should be a favorable and lasting one; the lobby should be in good taste and kept scrupulously clean, with harmony in the color scheme of walls, trimmings, frames and their contents. The use of polished brass trimmings and frames should be avoided. These are passé in the better theatres nowadays—they are expensive to maintain, are very easily soiled and dented and unless a great deal of time and effort is spent keeping brass bright, it looks worse than almost anything else.

If the walls are of marble or scagliola they should be kept clean and polished, and the joints pointed up. If of wood or plaster, fresh paint now and then upon the much-handled sections will keep things looking well at small cost.

The use of easel-frames for photos and other display in a small lobby should be avoided. They take up too much room and are easily knocked over, involving the expense of renewing broken glass, and often broken easels and frames.

Carved wood frames, in various finishes, fastened to the wall, and equipped with hinged fronts with glass securely fastened, are recommended as most effective in every way. They lend themselves to rich, attractive display of photos, etc., more effectively than any other style of frame. All frames should, if practicable, be made in a uniform style and finish—though not necessarily the same size.

In the writer's opinion, too much stress cannot be laid upon the importance of selecting, arranging and displaying lobby frames to the best possible advantage, and it is therefore suggested that frames be equipped with backs of compo or beaver board, covered with richly colored "rep" or cotton velvet, and that there be sufficient space between this back and the glass to allow the display of photographs to be in smaller carved wood, gilt or bronze-finished frames fastened against this background.

This involves keeping on hand a stock of the small frames, of which the following will be found about right:

2 dozen 6 inches by 8 inches.
3 dozen 8 inches by 10 inches.
1 dozen 10 inches by 12 inches.
1 dozen 11 inches by 14 inches.

The hanging or fastening should be secure, and so arranged that when the frame is in place, hooks, chains, picture wire, etc., will be concealed. Use only a double thick, white, flawless glass for lobby frames and always keep a few panes on hand for use in case of breakages.

As to the display itself, it should include photos of current, "next week" and "coming" attractions; frames should not be over-crowded with photos, and their arrangement should be tasteful. Each frame of photos should contain a neatly lettered card or brass plate 1½ inches by 7 inches indicating title and billing of acts displayed therein; and in prominent locations in the lobby should be frames, containing attractively lettered announcements of "next week" and "coming" attractions, as well as a complete list of the current bill.

Attractive results, and economical as well, can often be secured by using some of the

richly colored, beautiful, plain wall-paper now made, to paint these signs upon; and this paper may also be effectively used as backing in the photo frames, changing the design and color each time the frames are re-dressed.

Lobby frames, regardless of size or whether to hang or stand, should have hinged fronts with the glass SECURELY fastened. Neglect of this point has cost much in broken glass. The frame thus constructed permits glass to be easily cleaned, back re-dressed, and the entire proposition handled quickly and with minimum breakage.

On the front of the theatre the use of the electrically lighted transparency is very effective by day and more so at night, and if the house is being built, the walls should provide recesses for such frames as will accommodate electric lighting behind the glass front upon which the transparency is painted.

The sign-writer who is to handle the card work should be an artist, not a house painter. There is a great deal of this work to be done about a vaudeville theatre, and it is often better to select an individual rather than a firm, to handle the work. Not infrequently, arrangements can be made with the window-dresser of a leading dry-goods store; or with some ca-

pable individual who is employed at one of the sign-painting studios. Often such arrangements contemplate the artist working in a room about the theatre, and when this is the case, the manager should take an active interest in seeing that he has the proper facilities with which to work. Should it chance that the theatre is in a very small city, money will be well invested in sending the card-writer to the nearest large city to see how these things are done in leading theatres. The new poster effects in cards, various color combinations, "cut-outs," etc., are just as attractive and effective in getting business in the small town as in the large one.

It is wise to employ by the week the best man obtainable, and the management should take an intelligent and encouraging interest in his work. Apart from their decorative value, cards and bulletins should have a "punch"; they should be effective as well as pleasing.

The lobby should be well lighted, but never glaringly so. The seasons afford an opportunity for varying decorative schemes; in summer, the lobby should be cooled, the hangings lightened in shade if possible, and a "north pole" suggestion prevail; in winter, it should give an impression of warmth and colorful comfort. Mirrors conveniently placed in well lighted lo-

cations enhance the decoration and make an attractive appeal to matinée patrons.

Special

Under this heading will be discussed outside, inside and "stunt" advertising of an unusual nature, as distinguished from standing and customary displays and advertisements.

A consistent policy of taking the fullest advantage of any unusual events in the life of the city, such as conventions, fairs, cantonments, etc., is something that the alert manager should develop and adhere to. Every such event offers money-making possibilities to the theatre, and it is the theatre reaching these people oftenest and most effectively that "cashes in" on the attendance at such gatherings.

For instance, during the annual fair, carnival or similar activity, attractively colored tack-cards should be placed on telegraph and telephone poles along the main highway of travel to the place where the fair is being held; advertising kites may be flown from or adjacent to the grounds; arrangements can often be made to place a banner on the balloon which is ascending, or on the elephants in the parade; heralds or dodgers can be distributed on the

grounds, and a live advertiser can usually arrange to hang a large overhead banner from telephone poles across the main road leading to the grounds, at two or three important points. If it happens that there is a brassy musical act on the bill at this particular time, arrangements should be made with them to "ballyhoo" at the grounds sometime during the day, an auto being provided, with banners, for it to use going to and from the grounds and during concerts there. Some paper can probably be sniped on fences, barns, etc., on the route to the grounds, and perhaps arrangements made to put a banner, or some paper, on the judges' stand, and about the grand-stand at the race track. A fair or convention crowd can be made to look at something about the theatre everywhere it turns.

Theatres in cities adjacent to cantonments should observe about the same practices and every effort made to secure and hold the patronage of the soldiers. This involves treating them courteously. In this particular case, the manager should make it a point to know the commanding officer and his staff; boxes may be placed at his disposal now and then, and the acquaintance of the other officers cultivated; these attentions will bring cash to the box-office.

Every effort should be bent toward making the theatre popular—when the advertising has gotten people into the house, only fair, honorable and courteous treatment will hold and bring them back again.

Where cantonments are situated, arrangements can be made for tickets to the theatre to be handled through the canteen or company exchanges. Such arrangements are highly desirable, as credit is thus extended to the soldier by the canteen or exchange, which pays cash for the tickets, settling daily or weekly, as preferred.

Fraternal organizations may be used to good advantage by giving them "percentage" benefits; that is, a night is set aside in a certain week which is to be "Knights of ..... Night." It should be announced about five weeks in advance, and the organization permitted to sell tickets for that performance. The tickets thus sold should be exchangeable at the box-office for the regular ticket of the theatre; and on the night of the performance all the tickets they have sold (not only the ones that come into the box-office) should be settled for on a percentage basis. This often brings to the theatre many people who have not been regularly attending, and may make new patrons. Usually one or

more such nights can be arranged for each week, for a period of ten or twelve weeks. Thus there may be several hundred people talking about the show and endeavoring to sell tickets for it. Naturally, they recommend it. The women's clubs like this plan and have proved hard workers and business getters with it.

Arrangements can usually be made with the hotels and restaurants which print a menu each day, to run a line at the bottom about the theatre and show. This same arrangement can be made, as a rule, with the principal drug stores and soda fountains in connection with their lists of soft drinks and light lunches. The soda fountain men might be persuaded to name drinks after current headliners—for instance, the "Sophie Tucker Sundae;" and to display the names of these specials, not only on the printed list, but on the mirrors behind their fountains.

A tactful effort may earn the privilege of placing a small frame in the elevators in the principal buildings. People riding up and down have nothing to do but look around, and advertising of this type is almost 100 per cent effective.

Display frames in hotel lobbies, railroad stations, prominent windows, and like places should

be arranged for when possible, and the display therein changed regularly, frames maintained carefully and proper attention given to the extension of "courtesies" to those from whom the locations are secured. Arrangements in special instances can often be made with the leading merchants and laundries to enclose with each bundle sent out during a certain day or days, a herald descriptive of the show.

The dairymen of the city will probably accept, if furnished gratis, the little paper caps for milk bottles, bearing a suitable advertisement of the theatre. The cost is negligible.

Stickers may be used to good advantage, though care should be taken to see that these are not pasted in a manner to incur the wrath or enmity of those in charge of the premises.

When people of unusual prominence, the president, governor, or other well-known and beloved characters visit the city, a box should be placed at his disposal. The local baseball team should be entertained with a box party; the graduating class of the high school honored thus and this thoughtful courtesy extended to the local orphanage at certain matinées. It is a decided advertisement for the theatre to have a long line of orphans, in charge of nurses, file down the main street and into the theatre every

Tuesday or other "off" afternoon. It is an additional asset to have the house known as the one that will be attended by celebrities visiting the city.

The theatre should be quick to associate itself with patriotic and charitable movements and to co-operate in such work. Any and every activity looking to the improvement of the city, civic beautification, etc., should meet with the support of the theatre—and by these means it may be securely entrenched in the affection and respect of the leading citizens and their families.

If possible, arrangements should be made with the street car company for conductors to announce the name of the theatre, at the stop nearest it, in addition to the street, as "Main Street, Palace Theatre." Usually the traction company will co-operate in any consistent way in helping along the theatre's publicity efforts.

A scheme that has been worked to good advantage in many instances is to have two or three telephone girls call up each residence listed in the directory and inform the person answering that there will be an exceptionally good show at the theatre the following week. Those entrusted with this work should also know the scale of prices at the theatre, time of perform-

ances, names of acts, etc. The manager should be sure that they will take rebuffs gracefully, and that the hours during which this telephoning is done are selected with careful reference to the housewife's occupations. The best hours are between ten and eleven A.M. or two and five P.M.

House-to-house distribution of dodgers, heralds and folders is always good, if carefully and honestly done. It is wise to look up the city ordinances before going into this sort of advertising; there is very seldom an ordinance against house-to-house distributing, provided the advertising matter is handed to someone in each house; but many cities have regulations forbidding the handing out of such matter to passers-by on the street. Careless distributors, in a rush to get the work finished, may cause trouble for the theatre by violating some such ordinance. Whenever possible, the territory to be covered should be laid out in sections, through the use of a map; this prevents duplication, promotes system and permits the checking up of each distributor. Girls will be found to be more honest and careful than boys as distributors, though care should be taken in either case in regard to the observance of child-labor laws.

A morning show for newspaper men or lec-

tures at some school or college by a suitable artist who can arouse the proper interest, are good forms of publicity. Form-letters sent out to the right people from time to time, imparting to them some readable item of news written in a short, attractive, crisp style, about the show or theatre, often create interest and perhaps patronage.

The plan of having an "invitation" performance for the press or other selected craft or profession in connection with the work of some special act nearly always results in favorable press comment and desirable free publicity.

Anniversary weeks or nights, commemorating the building or opening of the theatre, with appropriate souvenir programs, etc., once each season, are usually good for increased patronage and revived or increased interest. Holidays, local and national, afford opportunity for special features and decorations.

The field of "special advertising" is so vast as to make it practically impossible to cover it entirely; the suggestions herein, either in some modified form or exactly as outlined, will be found to work out well in actual practice; the energetic, imaginative manager will work out other equally good or better schemes—and upon his initiative and discretion will depend the re-

sult that follows upon putting them into practice.

The matter of slide advertising in the theatre should receive careful attention. In this connection the author urges that the theatre's screen BE NOT made an advertising medium for anything but the theatre. In other words, outside slide advertising should not be accepted. It is true that some revenue may be derived from this, but it is not quite fair to charge patrons for a seat, put them in it, turn off the lights and then compel them to look at a weary succession of announcements concerning this, that or the other merchant's wares. The author has known audiences to criticize audibly this practice. They will cheerfully look at and be interested in announcements concerning coming attractions, but they resent being forced (and it amounts to forcing) to read a lot of advertisements in which they are not interested at the moment. This fact has become so well recognized that many shrewd merchants will not use screen advertising because they know that to a certain extent people resent it and it has an effect the reverse of that desired by the advertiser.

It follows that the theatre's own slides should be readable—brief and with a "punch" as to their matter.

In this connection—a word regarding the making of slides. If there is someone about the house who can letter neatly, desirable slides may be prepared by coating the glass with a solution made of common whiting, water and a little glue. Photographic opaque, purchasable at any kodak supply house, may also be used. After the coating has dried, then with a sharp pencil point, or orange-wood stick, lettering may be scratched through this coating, resulting in a slide showing a white letter on a black background on the screen. The letters can be tinted by placing colored gelatine between the glasses. There should always be a protective glass placed against the coated side of the slide. and the edges fastened with passe-par-tout tape.

Then, too, there are photographic slides. Most of the larger cities now have established slide-making concerns and where there is one it will probably be found best to use its facilities; photographs of the acts and a copy of the billing should be furnished by the theatre. These slides, while costing a little more, are usually much superior to the ones made in the theatre.

A great many standard acts, besides their usual offerings on the stage, are prepared to do special stunts. A few of these are listed in this article. There are many others, and as a general proposition they will make known to the manager the special things they do, and suggest the manner in which they can be most effectively utilized.

HOUDINI, the master magician, escaping from a strait-jacket while suspended in the air.

HARDEEN, jumping from bridge into body of water while handcuffed.

BRINDAMOUR, escaping from locked cell of local jail; also jumping into the water while handcuffed and manacled.

PAULINE, driving team of horses, while blindfolded, through the principal streets, and finding key hidden by committee.

DIVING NYMPHS, diving and swimming exhibitions from some bridge in city.

ODIVA, diving and swimming contests in tank on stage.

LITTLE BILLY, receptions for children on stage after matinée.

MASTER GABRIEL, receptions for children on stage after matinée.

LITTLE LORD ROBERTS, receptions for children on stage.

PELOT, of the Pelots, catching turnips dropped from high building on fork held in his mouth.

POTTER, of Potter and Hartwell, hand-balancing on cornice at top of high building.

WARD, of Ward and Usless, riding bicycle around top edges of high building.

ALEXANDER PATTY, of Patty Brothers, walking down steps of prominent building on his head.

JOHNNY REYNOLDS, balancing on chair at edge of top of building.

EDWARDS DAVIS, or the REV. FRANK GORMAN, delivers sermon from pulpit of church Sunday morning.

SINGER'S MIDGETS, street parade.

ALICE TEDDY, roller skating bear, lobby stunts.

GRUBER'S ELEPHANTS, street parade.

CHING LEE HEE, and other Chinese troupes, one member doing a "slide for life," suspended by cue, from some high point outside theatre to the ground.

WILLARD'S TEMPLE OF MUSIC, lobby and front-of-house musical festival.

TRAVILLA BROTHERS, educated seal visiting prominent persons and doing special "stunts."

MR. PROXY, the man who looks like President Wilson, special street and social "stunts."

THE VIVIANS, outside sharpshooting and lecturing.

MERCEDES, demonstrations of mental telepathy in Mayor's office; really wonderful, and usually receiving considerable notice from press.

GEORGE M. BROWN, long-distance walker, hikes with Boy Scouts and local walking contests.

WILLARD, the man who grows; demonstrations before medical clinics, etc.

HALE AND PATTERSON, tango and dancing lessons on stage after matinées.

CHARLES KELLOGG, the California naturalist, riding about streets with auto made from redwood tree; special invitation performance and demonstration on stage.

NOODLES FAGAN, talks to school children and newsboys.

And many others, whose special "stunts" of this sort may be made productive of much interest to the patronage of the theatre during the week they are on the bill.

Here follows a partial list of freak and unusual advertising "stunts," which, in the main, are antiquated and unsuited to present-day

uses; however, in communities where they have never been done, and in houses whose prestige will not be damaged by them, they may still be "put over," though the practice is, frankly, not recommended by the author:

The "Maggie Murphy" dummy on the street.
The "Bean Guessing" contest for prizes.
The "Stage Wedding."
The Coyne Advertising Kite and Balloons.
The Searchlight.
The "Prettiest Baby" Contest.
The "Barn Dance."
The "Cabaret" after Saturday night show.
The "Country Store."
The Monday Night "Prize Drawings."
The "Ladies' Free Tickets."
The "Ladies' Hat" Wednesday afternoons.
The "Grab Bag" for children Saturday afternoons.
The "Morning Matinée."
The "Sleeping Beauty" in a store window.
The "Artificial Flower" matinée.
The "Giving Away a Live White Baby."
The "Necktie Party."
The "Red-Headed Woman" and "Fat Man" matinée and night.
The "Painted Footprints" leading to the theatre.

The "Ad Card" on sidewalk held down by bricks.

The "Pie and Melon" eating contest.

The "Sandwich Man."

The Wagon Sign Perambulator.

The Town Crier and Bell.

"Rubeing" the street with bicycle or horse and wagon.

And last, but by no means least, "Amateur Nights."

CHAPTER V

UNIFORMS

THE better theatres in the larger cities devote much attention to the uniforming of the staff, and have been doing so for some years; the inference is that if it were not worth while from a dollars and cents standpoint, they would not do it.

The simple facts are that uniforming the staff lends a considerable dignity to the theatre, is impressive and gives tone to the entire enterprise. Moreover, there is something in the psychology of clothes. A man in a uniform is marked; people know that he is vested with more or less authority or represents those who are, and he feels the dignity and responsibility of the position which his uniform indicates.

The superintendent, door-men, ushers, footman, maid, and other attachés in front of the house, and such of the stage employees as now

and then come "on stage" during a show for the purpose of handling props, assisting acts, or changing announcements, should be neatly uniformed.

A uniform is impressive only if it is in good taste, clean, neatly pressed and fits its wearer. If faded, torn, patched, baggy or ill-fitting, it might better not be worn. Also, it is bad taste to uniform attachés in heavy cloth during the summer time.

Many a manager, outfitting his staff without giving this subject careful thought, has found after a considerable expenditure that the uniforms, in color, material, fit or general appearance, do not come up to the hopes justified by the outlay, and the purpose of this article is, if possible, to offer some suggestions based upon actual experiences, which will make the investment in this equipment as "worth while" as may be.

One should not go to the ordinary custom tailor for uniforms, any more than to the harness-maker for shoes; the making of uniforms is a business unto itself, a distinct and separate branch of tailoring requiring peculiar knowledge. Uniforms must be of proper fit to look well, so careful measurements and "try-ons" are very necessary.

The maker of uniforms should leave an "inlay" of one and a half inches in all seams, and this should be stipulated in the order.

It is more profitable in the long run to purchase a good quality of material, as it retains shape and lasts much longer.

In selecting colors, bright and flashy shades should be avoided.

At the close of winter and summer seasons, when the change from one set of uniforms to the other is made, those not in use should be thoroughly repaired, cleaned and packed away with some moth-protecting ingredient, so that pressing will make them ready to wear.

Materials for winter use: Broadcloth, cheviots, flannels, thibets and meltons; preferable are broadcloth, cheviots and meltons.

Materials for summer use: Serges, worsteds, mohairs, gabardines and white duck; preferable are serges, mohairs and gabardines. The upkeep of white duck makes it more expensive in the long run than any other material, and as it is not very "dressy," its desirability is questionable.

Colors: Navy blue, dark green, maroon, dark brown and gray are more durable than the delicate shades of mauve, plum, light maroon, old-rose, light green and marine blue.

Combination of colors and trimmings: The combination is made chiefly of a lighter color for trimming, finished with a narrow gold cord, bringing out the high lights of the uniform. This little touch of gold gives finish to the garment. An effective and tasteful combination is a maroon background trimmed with a bright American rose plush collar and cuffs with a quarter-inch gold lace at top of and around the collar and at top of the cuffs. A gray serge uniform may be trimmed with dark gray or black braid, the coat double-breasted with five silver buttons on each side and braid down each side of trousers. This uniform is used very much on the Continent, and in many of the high-class houses. Very light and inexpensive uniforms for the hot summer months are made of mohair in different shades and colors, such as dark blue, dark green, dark brown and maroon, trimmed with a narrow cord about 3/16 inch wide down each side of trousers and around collar and cuffs. The cord may be of white, silver, light blue, red, maroon or green, as will best carry out the color scheme.

Designs for Ushers' Uniforms

1. Five-button blouse, standing collar; black trimming around collar and cuffs and down side of trousers.

2. Fatigue coat trimmed with braid down center of front, around the bottom, up the side vents and around the collar and cuffs, down side of trousers.

3. Uniform coat, standing collar, with five buttons down the center and each side of front; trimmed with gilt or colored braid around cuffs and collar and down seam of trousers.

4. Standing collar with edge to edge opening down center; finished with narrow soutach or braid on edge of opening; six buttons on each side of coat from shoulders down; trimmed with heavy cord around cuffs and down seams of trousers.

5. Civilian coat, lay-down collar and short lapels; four buttons down front; straight cut.

6. Uniform page coat with standing collar; one row of buttons down center, also down each side of coat; trimmed with narrow gold cord on cuffs and trouser seams.

7. Admiral coat with standing collar; cut-away; six buttons down front and pleat in back, with long trousers.

8. Colonial uniform; cut-away coat with collar opening at front or white jabot with striped vestee attached; court breeches; white stockings and black pumps.

Miscellaneous Uniforms

Door-man. Single-breasted frock coat to the knee, with standing collar and braid down center of coat; to fasten with hooks and eyes; trimmed with black or colored velvet; collar and cuffs finished with gold cord at edge.

Superintendent. Five-buttoned frock coat to the knee; turned down collar with short lapels; six buttons down the center and slashers back of coat from waist down.

Policeman. Double-breasted frock coat; standing or lay-down collar with large reveres; to button across the breast with five buttons on each side of the coat; pocket flaps to waist line of coat and slashers in the back. Length of coat four inches below the knee.

Porter. Standing or lay-down collar, four or five buttons down the center; straight cut.

On Stage. Double-breasted coat, standing or lay-down collar; length of coat to the seat; four or five buttons each side of coat, straight cut; or, turned down collar buttoned to the neck with five buttons down center, straight cut.

Musicians. Musicians' or orchestra uniforms to consist of dark maroon velvet coat, tuxedo cut, with black velvet lapels and cuffs trimmed with black or red cord; to fasten across with one loop; one pocket on each side; black cloth trousers trimmed with black braid.

Caps should be selected from pictorial cuts or plates, as the styles and shapes are so many.

Girl Ushers' Uniforms

The girl ushers' uniforms are made in a great variety of styles, from the simple house-dress to the more elaborate costume, such as different National dresses. These are made in such materials as poplin, serge, luster mohair, silk, satin and floral satine. A unique girl usher's uniform is a tight fitting military coat, made of tan broadcloth or khaki with standing military collar, patch or imitation pockets, two lower and two upper, belt of lighter shade, five but-

tons down front and buttons at each pocket. Skirt, three-quarter length.

A handsome uniform may be made of black broadcloth. Coat with four buttons down front, standing collar, military style, one side having a large lapel set back against the coat trimmed with two rows of gold cord around the edges, and also around the coat and two rows around the sleeves. Tight fitting skirt three-quarter length trimmed with two rows of gold cord on each side with four buttons between the cords.

There are also the more conventional uniforms, such as three-quarter length black skirt, black waist with white Georgette or linen collars and cuffs, white frilled cap and French apron, black patent leather pumps; or Quaker gray dresses, pleated three-quarter length skirt, white cuffs, collar, cap and apron, gray stockings and pumps.

Programs, Advertising Curtains and Concessions

Programs. No uniform method of announcing or programming acts has been adopted throughout the country, but the following three systems are most in vogue:

1. The use of a printed program in conjunction with illuminated alphabetical or numerical annunciators placed at each side of the proscenium opening, which flash an initial or number indicating which of the acts in the printed program is next to appear. It is customary to leave this number or initial illuminated during one-half of the entire time that the particular act is "on."

2. Framed cards with name of act upon easels at both sides of the opening. The printed program is sometimes, but not as a rule, used with this system.

3. Illuminated glass transparencies at one or both sides of opening, transparency showing name of act, so arranged that only the names are illuminated one at a time.

Any of these methods, properly handled, is good; the first being probably the best, where satisfactory arrangements for the furnishing of a program can be effected.

In one way and another, the matter of furnishing patrons with a printed program presents material difficulties, but against these difficulties is the possibility of its becoming a source of considerable revenue.

It is customary to let the privilege of publishing the program to an alert individual or ad-

vertising agency, to fill with paid advertising matter the space not devoted to title, billing of acts, house notes and advance matter.

In making the contract covering this concession, it is suggested that the following points have careful consideration:

1. That the party undertaking to furnish the program be sufficiently established and of such financial standing as reasonably assures his ability to furnish it continuously throughout the period covered.

2. That it be distinctly understood that the theatre is not liable for bills for printing, cuts or other claims that may accrue against the publisher.

3. That no advertisements in their nature not acceptable to the theatre will be printed; such as those of saloons, clairvoyants, "blood specialists," etc.

4. That the number of programs, books or slips to be furnished be definitely stated, and the date or day and hour for delivery thereof be specified. Tardy delivery and insufficient quantity of programs should be provided against.

5. That the concession or privilege be not sublet without written consent of the theatre.

6. That a clear understanding be had of just how much space will be allotted for the use of the theatre, and of the grade of paper, and color and cover stock.

7. That payments to the theatre of amounts due for the concession be PROMPTLY made upon the date due.

8. That if possible, a cash deposit or a satisfactory bond protecting the theatre against loss if concessionaire does not fulfill his contract, be secured.

9. That provision against discontinuance of concession without a certain term of notice in writing by the party discontinuing be made.

The awarding of this concession should invariably be made the matter of a written agreement, setting forth fully just what each party undertakes, and NEVER effected by a general verbal understanding.

The amount to be paid by the concessionaire for this privilege varies so widely in different sections that suggestions on this point should not be made here; it should be governed, fairly and equitably to both parties, by local conditions as to advertising possibilities and printing costs. A copy of all contracts made for curtain and program advertising should be filed with the manager of theatre.

Advertising Curtains

Usually the "street drop," and sometimes the asbestos and house curtains also, carry a number of advertisements, although in the larger first-class theatres the ad-curtain is no more. As a rule, the spaces for these curtains are quite salable for greater or less amounts, depending upon the class of theatre, number of performances per day, business the house is doing, etc. As a general proposition, the spaces should be leased for the "season" or at least for three-month or quarterly periods.

There are several concerns making a specialty of leasing the entire curtain privilege in theatres, paying the house a certain fixed sum therefor, and usually these concerns are responsible.

In making a contract covering this concession, it is suggested that the following points receive particular attention:

1. The style of curtain or drop to be used, the number of spaces thereon, and the general design to be subject to the approval of the management.

2. The amount to be paid for the concession, and the periods of payment. If payment

is to be made upon a percentage basis, a triplicate copy of each contract made for space on the curtain should be filed with the manager of the theatre.

3. Advertisements not acceptable to the management shall not be placed upon the curtain.

4. A distinct understanding as to how often or how long the curtain or drop is to be displayed at each show.

5. The responsibility of the concessionaire; his ability to fulfill his obligations and the protection of the management by bond, cash deposit or other means.

6. Distinct understanding as to whose property the curtain or drop is to be; this for the reason that in some instances the concessionaire furnishes, paints and re-paints a house curtain or drop.

In many of the better-class theatres, street drop or house curtain advertising is not permitted.

Concessions. Candy and other concessions of this kind are a source of considerable revenue in many theatres, but in many of the first-class houses these have been discontinued although a few of such houses are still using the candy case in foyer or lobby. In general, contracts cov-

ering these concessions should specify the quality of the products which are to be sold; the price at which they are to be sold; the container (guarding against paper bags that rustle loudly); just what articles are to be dispensed (chewing gum being very undesirable), etc. The theatre should reserve the right to require concessionaire to employ as dispensers only persons satisfactory to the theatre, and to require such dispensers to be neatly uniformed. A badly behaved candy boy, a noisy "peddler" or one who runs up and down aisles, or seats himself amongst patrons during the performance, is not desirable—the management should have the right to require the concessionaire to replace him.

A peanut or popcorn stand, or similar enterprise, does not belong in the lobby of a well-conducted theatre, and if candy is to be sold at all, it should be dispensed from a case in lobby or foyer, instead of by venders passing up and down aisles.

Laundry, cleaning and pressing, baggage hauling and business privileges of this type are best left to be handled in accordance with the requirements of local conditions, which vary so greatly that it is impracticable to lay down any general rule.

Fire and Panics

A few years ago, in a mid-western city, a fire occurred in a theatre which resulted in the death of a great number of people. From time to time other fires have occurred in theatres, with heavy casualties, and the result of these has been to breed in the mind of the public at large a general distrust of any building in which crowds gather and which is not as fireproof in every way as human ingenuity can make it.

It follows that, aside from humanitarian considerations, the "dollars and cents" instinct should prompt the builder to construct his theatre as nearly fireproof as possible and to equip it with every known device to promote the safety of its audiences. To just the extent that these features are emphasized, and it is known that the house is safe, will the public be encouraged to patronize it.

Many mothers, by instinct timid where their offspring is concerned, inquire anxiously on this point before permitting the children to make a certain theatre their rendezvous on Saturday afternoons and holidays; fathers wish to know about these things, and the elderly and infirm are loath to attend a performance in a theatre con-

cerning the safety of which there is any question.

Then, too—while the author has never experienced it and hopes he never will—the feeling of responsibility resting upon a manager or builder who has erected an unsafe house in which lives have been lost, must be terrible, and this thought should prompt the building of a safe theatre in so far as that can be done.

No building is *absolutely fireproof;* concrete and iron will twist, warp and disintegrate in conflagrations.

The percentage of persons burned to death in theatre fires has usually been small in comparison with the total casualty list; it is the crush of the panic which is most deadly. In fact, it does not need a fire to start a panic. A fight; an unusual noise; a fuse burning out; sparks from an electric short-circuit; an overloaded wire burning off insulation and filling the house with a smoky odor; fire in another building in the same block; a patron with an epileptic fit; an unexpected commotion on the stage or in the audience; the lights going out suddenly; an unusually violent storm or clap of thunder; lightning striking nearby; an actor or animal falling into the orchestra pit; a lion or other large animal becoming uncontrollable

on stage; a false cry of "Fire!" by someone in the audience or elsewhere; the breaking of a sandbag permitting a lot of loose fine dust to sift quickly down onto the stage; scenery or border lights or main curtain falling; a fan or chandelier falling into the audience; any unusual noise or commotion in the picture booth—these or any one of an endless multitude of other incidents may start a panic where there is no fire, and in fact no danger, except that from the panic itself.

Panic is contagious; ordinarily courageous, brave men, and self-confident, well-balanced women, will suddenly lose their poise, their nerve, and become gibbering, pushing, slathering idiots; trampling over their fellows without compunction; straining, shoving and screaming, and a panic, like a stampede of cattle, gathers momentum long after its original cause has ceased to exist.

The greatest deterrents of panic are, first, *light*, and second, LIGHT, and third, LIGHT. If the lights do not fail, and people can look about them and SEE what the conditions are, they are not nearly so prone to unreasoning, blind fear. Hence, the emphasis in this work laid again and again upon the necessity of a safe and proper wiring installation, control of house

lights, not only from the stage, but by means of remote control switches from the box-office, doorman's station, and picture booth as well, and the feeding of lines supplying exit and stair lights from both front and back mains leading into the theatre. After LIGHT, have MUSIC—the orchestra trained to play a lively march, preferably patriotic ("Dixie" is suggested), and play it LOUD. People, seeing the orchestra remain in its seats, playing, are likely to sit down again and refuse to be stampeded.

It is essential at a time like this that aisles be of the approved widths, that exits be ample and that these exits be equipped with the approved devices for opening them from the inside. It is important (and usually a requirement of law) that all doors open *outward,* that alleys and exit-ways be not blocked up with boxes or any impeding articles—that there be a clear, unobstructed outlet to the open.

It is essential that automobiles, etc., be NOT PERMITTED to park in front of the theatre—it is IMPORTANT that the entire front be left clear, to provide quick egress across the sidewalk and into the street, and to provide as well an open space for the entry of the firemen, with their hose, etc., if there is a fire and they do have to come in. There MUST be room in front of the theatre for

their apparatus, and unobstructed space in which to work. Minutes lost here may cost hundreds of lives and thousands of dollars.

If audiences KNOW that the exits are ample, that the aisles are wide, that the house is fireproof, that the fire-extinguishing equipment is sufficient, that it is the custom of the management to pay attention to safeguarding patrons, panic is much less likely to occur than when publicity has not been given to these points, or the public is not well informed concerning them.

We know that the larger number of theatre fires start after performances are over and the house closed for the night. Next in number are those which occur during a show, starting on the stage, in a dressing-room, boiler-room or in scenery, caused as a rule by electrical short-circuit or other trouble, cigarette stubs, discharge of firearms, defective flues, or spontaneous combustion of waste paper, oily cloths, etc. Usually, the fire which starts during a show is extinguished before it does any damage, but IT MAY NOT BE; hence the desirability of eliminating EVERY POSSIBLE CAUSE of a fire. This involves THOROUGH cleanliness around and behind radiators, packs of scenery, and in corners, etc. It involves PRECAUTION in the use of firearms, elec-

trical equipment, and every apparatus which has fire-making possibilities.

To reduce to a minimum the danger of and from panic, the practice should be adopted of printing in programs, and running on the screen, an announcement that the theatre is provided with all safe-guards, and enumerating them, calling attention to exit facilities, and warning the audience against panics. This should be done consistently, performance after performance, year in and year out. Some day it may prevent a terrible catastrophe and save the management a harrowing memory.

Frequent inspection by the manager, and also by the superintendent or stage-manager, of the entire theatre and of the portions under their respective control, should be made, and these should be THOROUGH, with a merciless checking up of any employee or department found lax in attention to fire-prevention practices.

A fire drill should be held weekly, at unexpected times, in which the entire crew and staff should participate; each should have a station to report to, a specific duty to perform. It may be that when the fire comes some will not do their duty, but most will and there is a decided advantage in having them trained. When a fire does start, let the rule be that an alarm

is to be turned in immediately. Let no one take unto himself the responsibility of checking it—or of "thinking" that he can put it out; turn in an alarm. No man has any right to assume such a responsibility. Now this does not mean that everyone should begin to run for a fire alarm box; if there is one on stage (and there should be) it should be adjacent to the switchboard, and it should be the stage-manager's duty to turn in the alarm himself, or instruct the electrician, quietly, to do so. The box-office should be notified at once, and it in turn should telephone in an alarm, to make sure that the alarm DOES go in, and AT ONCE. Then, under the stage-manager's direction, work of combating the fire, if on the stage, should commence. The asbestos curtain should be lowered, all lights turned on, orchestra signalled to play, and, if possible, someone step out into the boxes from the stage and urge the people, if they are becoming panicky, to take their time and not push or crowd.

The writer here offers a few suggested safeguards:

Minimum width of an exit and exit-door for each five hundred persons or less should be 5 feet, and for every additional one hundred persons 20 inches should be added to this width.

Exit-doors should invariably swing outward, and it is not sufficient that they merely open outward, but they should swing entirely out of the way and flat back against the wall.

All exit-doors should be plainly designated as such in large, legible letters, and all other doors which might be mistaken for exits should be plainly marked "No Exit," or "Toilet," or some other marking which will indicate immediately that they are NOT exits.

Doors of exits to staircases should NEVER open directly upon the stairs, but upon a wide landing between doors and stairs.

Exit-doors should INVARIABLY be provided with "panic bolts," and NEVER locked or even equipped with locks for use with keys.

Stairways should be wide and easy, without winding or single steps; long stairs should be broken by wide landings, and all risers or treads should be uniform, to prevent stumbling.

Strong, well fastened hand-rails should be provided at both sides of stairways, and extremely wide stairs should be divided in the middle with a hand-rail. No obstructions on stairways should be permitted.

Aisles in auditorium should be of proper width; dimensions of seats should be generous, meaning 20 to 22 inches, for comfort's as well as

safety's sake, and clearance between seats should be ample. Seats should be securely fastened to floor.

External fire-balconies and stairs should be roofed over, and kept free and unobstructed.

Well-arranged, strongly built stairs should lead from dressing-rooms to exits on stage, and the actors' safety should be as well looked to as that of the audience, though there is almost no danger of panic back stage.

The use of candles, oil lamps, lanterns, etc., should be POSITIVELY prohibited; in these days the miniature electric flash lamps should be used.

Fire-apparatus should be frequently inspected and tested; the chemical containers should be renewed not less often than once annually, under supervision of someone designated by the local fire chief.

Install latest and best make automatic sprinkler system with tanks of ample capacity on roof. This system should be regularly inspected.

The fly-gallery and back stage should be equipped with fire-axes, pole hooks, durable ladders, hatchets, and a number of painted galvanized iron pails marked "For Use In Case of Fire Only," these to be kept covered, and refilled weekly.

Install in two or more accessible locations on each floor of auditorium, a hose reel, in recess with glass framed, easy opening door, the nozzle and hose to be connected, ready for use.

A fire-curtain of thick and strongly woven asbestos cloth, running freely in iron guides, is usually required by law; but should it chance that the law does not require it in the reader's locality, its installation is nevertheless urgently recommended.

The vent opening in roof of stage, automatic sprinkler system, fireproof and smokeproof corridors and stairways and fireproof construction are all matters upon which volumes of information are available, and the writer will not endeavor to go more deeply into the subject, feeling sure that the reader appreciates its importance, and will give it due consideration in planning, erecting and operating his theatre.

Insurance

There should be no necessity to call attention to the prime necessity of insuring a business against every hazard for which insurance may be had. Yet, in his travels, the writer finds many theatrical enterprises not so insured, and has known of many staggering losses occurring through inattention to this matter.

It is sound commercial practice to purchase EVERY type of insurance protection which is available for any business. The cost of insurance is based upon the invariably accurate law of averages obtained by actual experience, and premiums charged are in accordance with the risks assumed.

In constructing a theatre attention should be given, AT THE TIME OF PLANNING AND BUILDING, to the points which will affect the cost of insurance. In other words, reduce the risk to the minimum. For instance, in connection with the fire risk, consider the installation of a sprinkler system throughout the theatre; the height of walls above the roof; construction of copings; openings in walls adjoining other buildings; the construction of proscenium wall and its height; approved fire-doors and shutters on windows worked by weights suspended by fusible links; insulation of steam heating pipes; using only "Underwriters' approved" electrical equipment installed according to code, etc., etc.

Expert advice is available upon request to any of the companies, who will gladly go into detail on all points, instructing without cost as to the best practice from safety and insurance standpoints.

In many cities these are all covered by local building regulations and ordinances; in other cities the requirements are not so rigid. In the writer's opinion, it is advisable that at the time plans are submitted to the local municipal officials for approval in connection with issuance of building permit, a duplicate set should be submitted to an insurance authority for criticism and advice.

A reduction of a few cents per hundred dollars for insurance in effect over a period of years, will more than pay for the slight additional cost of building RIGHT and SAFELY in the first place. And remember this: while the cost of the insurance is thus being lowered, the hazard is likewise being reduced, and the likelihood of disaster of any sort is being brought to a minimum.

Too much stress cannot be laid upon the importance of READING POLICIES carefully and thoroughly. It is too often assumed that the policy covers this and that without actual KNOWLEDGE of just what its provision and coverages are. An insurance policy is like any other commercial contract in that certain duties and acts are to be performed by both parties. It should be seen to that, as the insured party, the owner has a thorough understanding of just what his duties under

the contract are, and is equally well posted as to just what the insurer has agreed to do. Do not assume that he will do thus and so; KNOW IT by clearly understanding just what he has agreed, in writing, to do. This subject is deemed of sufficient importance to justify repetition and the citing of a case or two.

In a certain fire not only the property of the theatre was destroyed, but as well a grand piano and an expensive set of furniture which had been borrowed as "props" and for which the theatre was responsible. The insurance company was not liable, merely because the insured had not required that his policy should cover such losses. He was only protected against destruction of *property of the theatre.*

An electrician, repairing a sign on the front of a theatre, dropped molten solder upon a lady passing below. Public liability insurance held by the theatre did not protect it in this case, because the policy provided that it covered losses only in case of negligence on the part of *employees of the theatre,* whereas, the electrician in this instance was the employee of a sign company, who had the sign on lease to the theatre and was maintaining it in accordance with a contract. Yet the court held that the theatre was responsible for the actions of

this man, and rendered a verdict against it. Both the sign company and the theatre were made parties to the suit, and it was the theatre which paid the loss. A simple "rider" attached to the public liability insurance policy would have protected the theatre against this loss, and saved it the considerable expense of defending the suit.

A bonding company declined to make good a treasurer's loss on the ground that he was not provided with adequate means for taking care of his money. Reading the policy brought out the fact that the insurance was effective ONLY if the treasurer was provided with a suitable iron safe in which to keep his funds.

Endless multiplication of such cases could be cited; but the point desired to be made is that policies should be CAREFULLY READ and understood, and clauses inserted to make the protection accorded COMPLETE. The insurance companies do not wish to evade their responsibilities, or take refuge in technicalities, but they DO object to policies being construed as giving more protection than is clearly undertaken by their written terms, and will generally go into court to defend themselves against loss on a risk that they have not specifically and in writing assumed.

Having emphasized the necessity of CLEARLY UNDERSTANDING just what protection is afforded, the advisability of maintaining the following classes of insurance is suggested:

Fidelity or Surety Bond

Manager, treasurer, assistant treasurer, and any other employees who handle and account for funds of theatre. DO NOT accept private or personal bonds, but place this insurance in reputable companies, and pay the premiums.

Burglary and Theft

Protecting the box-office, treasurer or assistant treasurer on way to and from the bank; also covering loss of valuable paintings, statuary, draperies, etc., and effects of artists.

Fire

Covering not only property of the theatre, but a blanket coverage of all property that may be on loan for use in connection with the shows, etc. Also specifically covering loss to artists and acts of wardrobe, trunks, scenery and effects. (Note: Most fire insurance policies require annual inventories, in writing, to be made as a condition of the policy remaining in effect. See that this provision is complied with.)

Public Liability

Study the coverage desired, and see that policy is explicit on all points. (Note.—Secure protection not only within the four walls of the theatre, but to the sidewalk line as well.)

Employer's Liability

Usually required by law. Read policies carefully. Premium based upon payroll and hazard; keep records carefully and accurately.

Storm, Tornado, Lightning, Etc.

Secure coverage of borrowed "props," etc.

Plate Glass, Elevator

Read carefully and understand just what protection is accorded. If coverage is not sufficient, request "riders" to cover special points.

Steam Boiler

Cover borrowed "props," etc., and artists' property, wardrobe, etc.

In conclusion it may be said that premium rates are generally uniform in the various companies, but regardless of this point only established, reputable concerns of unquestioned soundness should be accepted as insurers.

The Orchestra

The orchestra may be made a decided drawing card, featured in program and advertising matter; or it may be just an orchestra.

Better three pieces and real musicians, than eight or ten mediocre ones. Whatever its size, every possible effort should be made to get quality. Without real music, the average vaudeville show is decidedly handicapped. A poor quartette of singers, for instance, can be almost unbelievably improved through intelligent and artistic playing of the violin and trombone in the orchestra.

If it is possible to secure musicians who are capable soloists, this should be done; solo numbers by the violin, cornet, trombone, etc., may be featured in the program. To vaudeville, the trap drummer is a necessity.

It is suggested that the following points receive attention in assembling the orchestra:

Leader: Violin or piano; needs for a vaudeville theatre, to be a patient and extremely capable musician. Sometimes he has to possess almost clairvoyant powers to interpret the needs of some acts. He and his musicians will fre-

quently have to contend with poorly written, almost illegible music; it often reaches him torn, blotted, pencilled and erased until it is difficult to recognize it as music at all. It is often the case that an act does not bring any music, merely desiring a quick little waltz or march for opening and closing a sketch, or asking the orchestra to "fake" this or that throughout an acrobatic act, or during some "business." It follows that the leader must be adept at choosing a suitable number in keeping with the spirit of the act. It also follows that the orchestra must be able to "fake" in good harmony. So far as the author knows, there is no field of musical endeavor requiring quite so much versatility, all-around ability, patience and general musical knowledge as that of the vaudeville orchestra.

Artists are prone to "cut" rehearsals, or to shorten them to mere "flashes." Often the description of "business," cues and other information given the leader and trap drummer is garbled and insufficient.

In practice, the author has found it by far the best to require rehearsals to the point where the leader, orchestra and actor have each reached a clear and definite understanding of just exactly what is to be done, and how and

when. This is sometimes trying to the patience of all concerned, but it results in a good opening performance and tends to remove the impression the public often has that the first show of the new bill is merely a dress rehearsal, resulting in lighter attendance than would be the rule if it were known that the first show were likely to be as finished and smooth as the last.

The leader should make it an invariable custom to see each of the acts after the first show and inquire if the music has been satisfactory, and to give another rehearsal to any act requesting it. The conscientious leader will do this willingly; the one who won't, has not the interest of the house at heart, and should be replaced with one who is interested and loyal enough to feel that no effort is too great which will result in an improvement of the show.

A leader will have many things to contend with; not only the problem of keeping the men under him up to a high standard, but as well of maintaining pleasant relations with the artists. He should bear in mind that he, in common with all the other employees of the theatre, has but one course to pursue if the house is to be a success, and that is TO DO HIS BEST. Artists come and go—some pleasant and agreeable, now and then some decidedly otherwise. The closest co-

operation between the artist and the orchestra is absolutely essential if the show is to go well; and each should remember that anything tending to make the show less of a success than it could be operates to a corresponding extent to keep patrons away from the box-office.

Overtures should be carefully chosen, varied between classical and popular numbers, and changed as often as the show changes. Now and then, a "jazz" number is permissable, but loud, brassy, clashing music should be avoided as a rule. Muted instruments—a quiet tone—real music—will be listened to and appreciated by the audiences. It is suggested that "Marching Through Georgia" is a poor number to play in southern territory; the sentiments of the locality in which the theatre is established should be considered always.

The leader and the manager can and should arouse interest in the orchestra as such; if they do, it will soon have a decided following and do much to cement the friendly feeling of the public to the theatre.

It is better to feature the house orchestra than the leader. If the leader resigns or is discharged, the orchestra remains, with only one place to fill.

The leader should take care that during the progress of the show there is no let-down—that is, if there is an unavoidable stage-wait, there should be some little incidental music during it, not a special number but something that will keep the audience quiet and prevent straying of attention, starting of conversations, etc.

The leader should be in responsible charge of the orchestra, accountable only to the manager. He should confer with the manager in selecting overtures. Under no circumstances, should the manager issue instructions direct to the sidemen, but only through the leader.

At the appointed time, at least fifteen minutes before curtain, the orchestra should go in the pit, and play continuously until the performance starts. It is wise to discourage the usual practice of an orchestra leaving the pit during a silent act—a sketch or other offering that does not require music. No matter how quietly this is done, the movement in the pit is disconcerting to the audience, attracts its attention in a minor degree perhaps, but none the less effectively, from the act—and every now and then one of the men will knock over a chair or a music-stand.

These are things concerning which the leader should instruct his men, and the enforcing of such regulations should receive the manager's fullest co-operation.

The leader should have an ample library; if he is not the type of man to take a keen interest in making his orchestra the best in town and to feel great pride in its accomplishments, he is not the ideal one to engage.

Sidemen should be selected by the leader; he will be responsible for their ability and conduct in the theatre, and should have a free hand in this matter; except that he should advise with the manager, and only be overruled when the latter is very sure that his position is correct.

Sobriety in the orchestra should be an absolute requirement; taking liberties with the music of acts, or "kidding" artists, should NEVER be permitted. Members of the orchestra should never talk to patrons in front rows, or ogle ladies in the audience. "Mashers" have no place here, and should not be tolerated for a minute.

The number of pieces in orchestra will be governed largely by the amount of money to be allotted for salaries. As a rule, however, it requires a minimum of five pieces for anything like good results; the instrumentation: Violin, piano, cornet, trombone and trap drummer. If

six pieces, add a clarinet; if seven, bass viol; if eight, a flute; if nine, a second violin; if ten, an organ for volume, tone and strength. A greater number should be the subject of consultation and agreement between manager and leader, it being remembered that the latter is probably familiar with the ability of the various local men. It may be preferable to deviate slightly from the instrumentation herein proposed. It is well to make sure that a less suitable or desirable instrument is not being put in merely to provide employment for the individual who plays it.

The drummer should be chosen with a view not only to his ability, but to his traps as well. He should have a complete assortment of effects, chimes, xylophone, tympani, etc.

The "cue" light—a very small amber-colored globe located where the leader (but not the audience) can see it—should be flashed with a switch or button at the switchboard on stage. The use of a buzzer is not advisable, unless it is very subdued, and the practice of flashing the footlights or the orchestra lights is extremely "small time."

The equipment of the pit should include a bentwood chair and a music-stand of approved design for each musician. Music-stand lights

should be amber-colored, of small candle-power, and so arranged that the light is reflected directly onto the music and *not* in the audience's eyes. Some attention should be given to this arrangement, as points of light standing out sharply against the background of a dark stage not only depreciate the beauty of the settings, but strain the eyes of the audience.

If the theatre is not yet constructed, it is urgently recommended that careful attention be given to providing a pit of sufficient size, so planned that an upright or grand piano can be placed in it; also a small organ. Sufficient space should be allowed at the drummer's end for his traps, tympani, etc., and at the opposite or bass viol end for the large and unwieldly instrument. The pit must be low enough so that the heads of the musicians will not project above the line of the footlights.

There should be a speaking tube from the switchboard on stage to the leader's stand.

If any untoward event happens while the performance is on, such as fire or anything that threatens panic, the orchestra should immediately play a lively march, preferably something like "Dixie."

In the main a faithful, hardworking lot, living in the land of fancy, inclined to be egotistical, yet sensitive; temperamental, yet with here and there a disconcerting strain of keen foresight; often envious or jealous of the progress or success of fellow artists; easily influenced and quick to take offense at real or fancied belittlement of their own particular act or style; ambitious for success in their chosen field of effort—those children of "make-believe" are often actors on and off.

The artist, therefore, with his temperamental shortcomings, his dislike often for sordid details, and much "camouflage," frequently does not use shrewd or even good judgment in the making of contracts, or in other business dealings. It follows that now and then he is taken advantage of by some unscrupulous manager or sharp agent; and as a result he is often prejudiced against all managers and agents. There are some artists, and likewise some managers and bookers, who are a discredit to the profession; but these grow constantly less in number as it becomes better understood by all concerned that the fittest survive; it is only

the artist, manager or booker who is "on the level" in business and in all other dealings who is really "fit."

Remember then, that the artist's life, his very existence, is one of art, imagination, uncertainty, disappointments, laughter and happiness mingled with tears and sorrows, and that he is a cross between the bohemian and the cosmopolite. It should be the aim of a manager to take intelligent notice of these characteristics, and in his business dealings with artists bear and forbear in a wise and just manner. It is an old saw and a true one, that "you can catch more flies with sugar than with vinegar."

Bear in mind that though the theatre be beautiful, its stage perfectly equipped and lighted, the staff efficient and courteous, it is the artist who gives the show—it is to the actor that one must look for the actual entertainment.

Though each manager may have his own and perhaps peculiar idea of just what his attitude toward the actor should be, and just what rules and regulations should govern the latter, the important points with respect to the business side of the engagements are, or should be, invariably covered by signed contracts. If both will observe to the letter the stipulations of the contract, and the manager meet in an

open-minded, fair manner the little complaints that now and then arise, there will be little room for arguments, and probably very few will occur.

There are many clauses of the contract form in general use to which artists as a rule fail to accord the necessary recognition, and by so doing often create dissension. It usually suffices to produce the manager's copy of the contract and invite attention to the wording of the clause which is being violated by either party.

Other things tending to create friction are:

Failure of the artist to send billing, plots and photos sufficiently ahead to enable the manager properly to advertise and prepare for the act.

Reporting late for rehearsal without just cause. This is frequently due to the artist's arriving on the latest possible train, instead of having taken from the preceding town the first available train after his final performance there.

Transporting music in trunks instead of in hand baggage, with result that when baggage is delayed rehearsals must wait.

Failing to carry, if possible, enough suitable wardrobe to enable the act to go on and "do something" with a semblance of the regular

act, when baggage has miscarried or been delayed.

Arguments concerning dressing-room assignment. This is a matter entirely up to the management.

Complaining of "spot" or position on the bill, another matter which, unless regulated otherwise by express stipulation in the contract, is entirely within the jurisdiction of the manager—who may leave it to his booking agent to arrange the running order of a program.

Using profane, indecent, vulgar, suggestive or other objectionable phrases, words or actions in the act, and protesting against their elimination by the management.

Protesting against the management's cutting down time of act.

Insufficient rehearsals, inadequate to give the orchestra, or others concerned in presentation of the act, an accurate idea of just how it is to be handled.

Quarrels as to priority of right to use a certain song or bit of music. It is the general custom to rule that the artist who first rehearses a certain song has the prior right to use it on that bill, and may legitimately ask that others on the bill do not use it—though it is entirely

within the jurisdiction of the management to permit both, either or neither to use it.

"Cutting" or shortening the act on final performances, unless by consent of the management. The management has the right to expect that the act will not be "cut" or changed, from the way rehearsed, except with his consent. The artist should not "cut," "change," or "cheat" in his work, and should continue during the entire engagement to do the act as at the first approved performance. Otherwise he seriously breaches his contract.

Disputes concerning the size of type used on posters, the position allotted the act in lobby display, on boards in front of the theatre or in general outside advertising. These are matters entirely within the discretion and judgment of the management, unless otherwise specifically provided in the contract.

The artist should realize that as a general rule the nomination of his position on the bill has had careful attention from perhaps three or four persons who have made a study of "framing" bills, including the manager of the theatre, and that these have arranged it with the single idea of using each act to the best advantage and with a view of properly balancing the entire program.

The manager has the right, and may be expected to exercise it, of watching his opening shows very carefully and, based upon his observations, of eliminating anything which, in his judgment, he deems best to eliminate, from any act.

The manager has the right to expect and to receive from the artist his best efforts—all the contract calls for—and receiving these from the artist is obligated, morally and otherwise, to do what he reasonably can to make the engagement pleasant and profitable for the actor.

The deportment of the artist during his engagement is of much importance. In the theatre, on the street and at the hotel, it is due the theatre that his conduct be discreet and becoming. In a sense he is a walking advertisement for the theatre; to a great degree the character of the actor is judged by the public to be that of both the theatre and the profession in general, and it is the perfect right of the management to expect and require such conduct as will reflect credit upon both. Many thousands of dollars have been expended to give the artist a place in which to play—an opportunity to offer his art; it is but fair that he conduct himself as becomes a member of an honorable and dignified calling. When his en-

gagement is finished, he goes on his way, perhaps never to return; but the theatre and its local management remain, and must face such comment as there may be from patrons and others in the community. Let the artist see to it, then, that his appreciation for the engagement, respect for the theatre and loyalty to the best traditions of the stage prompt him so to conduct himself as will increase the prestige of each.

A splendid rule for the government of both parties in these matters is the Golden One—it will never lead either far wrong.

Booking Affiliations

If the building of a new theatre is contemplated, and it is intended that its policy shall be vaudeville, or for that matter any other form of amusement, it will be well to look to whatever booking affiliations may be established. There have been cases where all contracts had been let for the construction of a house and operations thereupon actually started, before the promoter or builder discovered that the franchises for desirable attractions were held by other parties for that particular city, or that the town was so located

that it was impracticable to connect it with any of the circuits, on account of the distance from the nearest town playing the desired shows.

The writer's suggestion as to procedure in this matter is as follows:

The builder, or a representative of the principal financial interests involved, should take up with the strongest booking concern operating in that territory the matter of securing a franchise for the proposed theatre.

He should look carefully to the standing of the concern with which he proposes to do business and to which he intends extending the right to furnish talent for his house. The reputation of the booking office for keeping its engagements and rendering satisfactory and efficient service should be thoroughly investigated. Its financial standing should be inquired into through the builder's banker, and a commercial agency as well. A trip to one or two of the nearest towns in which that particular agency is booking, and a discussion of the matter with the managers of such houses, is advisable.

The often exaggerated promises of recently established, weak or inefficiently conducted booking offices should be discounted. It should be assured that the promises made of service are in keeping with what the office has been actually

doing—not for a month or so, but over a period of years.

Having made a thorough investigation of all these matters, it is best to write that office which on the surface seems best equipped to handle the proposed bookings, and to make an appointment for an interview with the executive head thereof. Only a personal interview can assure the builder or manager that he is safeguarding the future of his theatre. Money spent on these preliminaries is by no means wasted. Indeed, unless such safeguards are taken, the sums spent on building and equipment are quite likely to become a losing investment.

The practice of booking offices, as a general proposition, is to issue to the theatre, a "franchise" contract for its particular city, wherein the office agrees during the term of the franchise, not to book any other theatre in that city. On the part of the proprietor, or manager, he agrees to use exclusively such acts or attractions as are furnished by the office with which he contracts for bookings.

The franchise in some instances carries a bonding clause, wherein the proprietor or manager is required to indemnify the booking office against loss in connection with issuance of contracts in the name of the theatre, and also

against any violation of the terms of the franchise contract. It authorizes the booking office to sign contracts in the name of the theatre, to use its judgment in selecting talent, and customarily establishes a certain limit of cost for the average bill or week.

It is usual and justifiable for the booking office to make a charge for its service. The amount of this charge varies, depending upon the size of the city and theatre, the class of attractions, and other considerations.

Until it has been made sure, by personal investigation, that a strong booking affiliation can be made, and a definite contract providing therefor has been entered into, it is not wise to build a theatre.

If the theatre is already built, and has perhaps been in operation, but it is now proposed to change the policy or present booking affiliation, the author would again impress upon his reader the necessity for exercising the best possible judgment in selecting the service to be used.

THE END

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